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THE WORLD'S BEST ESSAYS

FROM CONFUCIUS TO MENCKEN

Edited by F. H. Pritchard

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PREFACE

In this volume an attempt has been made, not to present a more or less haphazard collection of elegant extracts, but to illustrate the development of one of the most important forms that literature has assumed. The essay, because it is homely and unpretentious, has often been belittled and any special significance denied to it. That anybody can write essays sums up a view which is all too common. At best they are often held to be but the odds and ends that fall from the writer's table as he is engaged upon the larger matters that really count. The main purpose of the present collection is to show that, on the contrary, the essay is one of the oldest literary forms, and that its vitality and importance have increased with the years. It has played a part, indeed, in the spread of culture and common sense that could hardly have been filled by any of the more ambitious kinds of literature. This is believed to be the first attempt to illustrate the growth of the essay by a really comprehensive selection drawn from the principal literatures of the world.

In the work of selection the editor acknowledges with gratitude the help he has received from the many experts who have been good enough to show a keen interest in his project. Special mention must be made of the following, each of whom has given invaluable assistance with the section indicated: Dr. E. J. Thomas, of the University Library, Cambridge (Ancient India); Mr. Reuben Levy, Lecturer in Persian at Cambridge University (Persia and Arabia); Mr. Arthur Waley (China); Mr. Gonnoské Komai (Japan); Dr. Denis Saurat, of the Institut Français, London (France); Dr. Camillo Pellizzi, of University College, London (Italy); Dr. William Rose, of King's College, London (Germany); Dr. J. F. de Wilde, of Amsterdam (Holland); Mr. Eskil Sundström (Sweden); Mr. H. K. Lehmkuhl and Mr. Johan Bojer (Norway); Mr. J. H. Helweg, of University College, London (Denmark); Mme. Aino Kallas (Finland and Estonia); Prince D. S. Mirsky (Russia); Dr. Otakar Vočadlo (Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, and Jugo-Slavia); and M. Marcu Beza (Roumania).

In compiling the biographical notes and introductions many works have been consulted, including Botta's *Handbook of Universal Literature*, Moulton's *Modern Study of Literature*, *The Modern Readers' Bible*, and *The Literary Study of the Bible*, W. H. Hudson's *Introduction to the Study of Literature*, *Chambers' Biographical Dictionary*, Manly and Rickert's *Contemporary British Literature* and *Contemporary American Literature*, and Legouis and Cazamian's *History of English Literature*.

Wherever possible the source and authorship of translations have been indicated. Many of the essays have been specially translated for this volume and the editor wishes to express his indebtedness in this respect to Dr. E. J. Thomas; Mr. Reuben Levy, M.A.; Miss Dorothy Margaret Stuart; Mr. J. W. Jeaffreson, M.A.; Miss Ena Makin, M.A.; Dr. William Rose; Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt.; Miss M. Guiterman; Mrs. Elizabeth Sprigge; Mrs. Ellen Lehmkuhl; Mr. J. Krzyżanowski; Mr. F. P. Casey; Miss Dora Round; Mr. Josif Torbarina; and the Hon. Mrs. Lucy Byng.

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F. H. P.

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THE
WORLD'S BEST ESSAYS

ANCIENT GREECE

Introductory Note

IN *The Classical Tradition in Poetry* Professor Gilbert Murray has shown how Greek Literature developed from the *Molpê*—a primitive ballad-dance in which speech, song, and action were combined. In course of time these elements became differentiated and the various literary forms separated out. So the epic—the recital of high deeds on an appropriately lofty plane—was evolved on the one side, and the drama—the presentation of action—was produced on the other. In addition there is the reflective element which is seen when a thoughtful mind muses on things as they are, and presents us with the conclusions formed as a result of thought and observation. They may at first be disjointed, and embedded with other matter of a different kind, but as time goes on the tendency is to collect these "sayings" and gradually to organize and weld them into units which are not far removed from essays as we now understand the term. Indeed there is nothing more striking than the modernity of some of these essays which were written so many hundreds of years ago. The Greeks were habitual philosophers, ceaselessly asking themselves "How?" and "Why?" with reference to man's life and work on this earth. It was a habit of mind with them. It led them to discover that which was essential beneath all the trappings of a day, and that is why so much of their literature is as new to-day as when it was written.

* * *

PLATO

AT THE age of nineteen Plato (429-347 B.C.) became one of the pupils of Socrates and remained with that great philosopher until his death. Socrates, a stonemason and sculptor, disclaimed any pretensions to knowledge. He merely asked questions in order to expose the ignorance of those popular teachers who used catchwords and phrases which they did not really understand. By his shrewd interrogations he sought first to get his listeners to see how inadequate their knowledge was and then to search for something deeper and more certain. He was put to death in obedience to the popular clamour. Plato was present at his trial and, after many years spent in travelling in various parts of Asia Minor, Egypt, Italy, and Sicily, he settled down as a public lecturer on philosophy. His lectures were delivered in the gardens of the Academia, one of the big Athenian parks, where young

athletes practised their games. Democratic government was responsible for the death of Socrates—a fact which Plato never forgot. All his distrust of democracy and his bitterness as he remembers that deed are shown in the following dialogue, the opening words of which are supposed to have been pronounced by Socrates.

This passage is taken from Jowett's translation of Plato's *Republic*, by permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

OF DEMOCRACY

NEXT then, I suppose, we must examine democracy and find out how it arises and what it is like, so that we may know what the democratic man is like and estimate his value.

That is the next step, I think.

Does not a city change from government by a small class to government by the people through uncontrolled pursuit of wealth as the ultimate object of life?

How?

I think that the governing class in such a city hold their position because of their wealth, and that therefore they will not pass laws to prevent the young men from living extravagantly and spending and wasting their goods; for they will want to increase their own wealth and importance by buying up what has to be sold and lending the young men money.

They will.

Now, it is quite clear, is it not, that it is impossible at one and the same time to worship money and keep a high standard of honesty among the citizens; one or the other will have to go?

That is clear enough.

Sometimes the governing class in a city has so neglected discipline that men of remarkable ability have been forced into poverty.

That is quite true.

Such men settle in the city, armed and ready to sting, some in debt, some having lost their citizenship, some both, hating and plotting against the men who have acquired their wealth, entirely set on revolution.

Yes.

But the money-makers fix their eyes on the ground and pretend not to see them; instead they go on poisoning with their wealth any of the other citizens who give up the struggle, and increase the number of drones and beggars in the city. While, as for themselves and their own sons, their young men are luxurious and useless both in mind and body, lazy and too soft to endure pain or resist pleasure.

Well?

When the ruling class and the ruled meet one another in the streets or at public meetings, at festivals or in the army, when they serve side by side either on board ship or in the ranks and see one another facing danger, the poor will not be despised by the rich. On the contrary, often a poor man, strong and brown, stands in the ranks next to a rich man, who has lived an indoor life and is far too fat; and, seeing his shortness of breath and general discomfort, will surely think that such men as these are rich simply because the poorer classes are cowards. And whenever he meets his friends the word will get passed round, "We can do what we like with these men; they are good for nothing."

I am quite sure that they will.

Well then, I suppose, democracy comes into existence when the poor have conquered the rich, killing some, banishing others, and sharing citizenship and office with the rest; and generally in such a city the offices are distributed by lot.

That is how democracy is established, whether it be through armed force or whether the opposite side give in at once through fear.

Well now, how will they live and what kind of a government will theirs be? First, of course, they are free, and the city is full of freedom and free speech and every one may do whatever he wishes.

So they say.

And where every one may do as he wishes it is quite clear that each man will order his own life in the way that pleases him best.

Yes.

So, I imagine, under this government we shall find men of all sorts and kinds.

Certainly.

Then this is likely to be a very beautiful form of government. It will be like a rainbow-coloured cloak of many shades, for it will have every type of character and so will be very beautiful to look at. And perhaps, just as children and women like the look of bright colours, many people will think this kind of government the most beautiful.

Indeed they will.

Then, my friend, it is a convenient city to look for a constitution in.

Why?

Because it has all kinds of constitutions through every one being able to do what he likes. You can go to it as if it were a universal provider of constitutions, choose which you prefer, and found your city.

There will certainly be a good choice.

There is no need to hold office in this city, if you are not equal to it, nor to obey the government, if you don't want to, nor go to war because the city is at war, nor to keep the peace because the city is at peace,

if you personally don't want peace. Is not this a gloriously pleasant kind of life for the moment?

Perhaps, for the moment.

And how considerate such a city is! No nonsense there about trifles! They think nothing there of all the things we mentioned with such pride when we were founding our city; we said then that no one could become a good man if his childhood were not passed in beautiful surroundings and in the practice of beautiful deeds. This city sublimely tramples all this down and does not care from what sort of a life a man comes when he enters politics, but honours him if he only just says that he is friendly to the masses.

It is wonderful.

Then these and similar characteristics would be the features of a democracy; it seems to be a pleasant form of government, varied and without rulers, dealing out its own special brand of equality to equal and unequal alike.

* * *

ARISTOTLE

Called the Stagyrite because he was a native of Stagyra, in Macedonia, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) went to Athens and became Plato's most promising pupil. For three years he had charge of the education of Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon. On returning to Athens he founded a school called the Lyceum and composed most of the works which we now have. He was accused of blasphemy after the death of Alexander and went to Chalcis, where he stayed until his death. The encyclopædic range of Aristotle's knowledge is amazing. He was styled by Dante "the Master of those who know," and although he was the devoted pupil of Plato for nearly twenty years, his teaching differs from that of his master in a striking way. Plato was the visionary interested in the speculative side of knowledge: Aristotle's mind ran along practical lines and made him keenly observant of the facts of life that were near and could be verified. His writings are by no means easy to read for they are merely lecture notes, more or less fragmentary.

The following passage is taken from the translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* by R. W. Browne, M.A., Ph.D., by permission of Messrs. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd.

OF HAPPINESS

A QUESTION is raised, whether happiness is acquired by learning, by habit, or by exercise of any other kind; or whether it is produced in a man by some heavenly dispensation, or even by chance.

Now, if there is any other thing which is the gift of God to men, it is reasonable to suppose that happiness is a divine gift, and more than anything else, inasmuch as it is the best of human things. But this, perhaps, would more fitly belong to another kind of investigation: but, even if it be not sent from heaven, but is acquired by means of virtue, and of some kind of teaching or exercise, it appears to be one of the most divine of things; for the prize and end of virtue seems to be something which is best, godlike, and blessed. It must also be common to many; for it is possible, that by means of some teaching and care, it should exist in every person who is not incapacitated for virtue. But if it is better that people should be happy by these means, than by chance, it is reasonable to suppose it is so, since natural productions are produced in the best way in which it is possible for them to be produced; and likewise the productions of art, and of every efficient cause, and especially of the best cause. But to commit the greatest and the noblest of things to chance would be very inconsistent. Now the thing we are at present in search of receives additional clearness from the definition; for happiness has been said to be a kind of energy of the soul according to virtue; but of the remaining goods it is necessary that some exist in it, and that others should be naturally assistant and useful, instrumentally. But this will agree with what we stated in the beginning; for we set down the end of the political science as the good; and this devotes its principal attention to form the characters of the citizens, to make them good, and dispose them to honourable actions.

It is with reason, then, that we do not call an ox, a horse, or any other beast, happy; for none of them are able to participate in this kind of energy. For this cause, also, a child cannot be called happy; for from his time of life he is not yet able to perform such actions; but those who are so called, are called happy from hope; for, as we said, there is need of perfect virtue, and of perfect life. For the changes of life are numerous, and the accidents of fortune various; and it is possible for the man in the enjoyment of the greatest prosperity to become involved in great calamities in the time of his old age, as is related in the story of Priam, in the *Iliad;* and no man will call him happy, who has experienced such misfortunes, and died miserably.

Are we, then, to call no other man happy as long as he lives, but is it necessary, as Solon says, to look to the end? But if we must lay down this rule, is he then happy when he is dead? Or is this altogether absurd, especially in us who assert happiness to be a kind of energy? But if we do not call the dead man happy, and even Solon does not mean this, but that a person might then securely call a man happy, as beyond the reach of evils and misfortunes, even this assertion admits of some dispute. For if there is some good and evil to the man who is alive, and who is not aware of it, there may be supposed

to be some to the dead man also, as honours and dishonours, and the good and evil fortunes of children and descendants generally. But this too occasions some difficulty; for when a man has lived happily till his old age, and has died in the same manner, it is possible that various changes may happen to his descendants, and that some of them should be good, and enjoy a life according to their deserts, while others obtain the contrary one; but it is clearly possible for them, taking into consideration the distance of time, to stand in every imaginable relation towards their parents. Now it would be absurd, if the dead man were to participate in their changes, and be at one time happy, and then again miserable; and it would also be absurd, that the fortunes of children should not, in any instance, or at any time, reach to and affect the parents.

But we must return to the doubt originally started; for perhaps from its solution the present question might receive elucidation. Now, if it is necessary to look to the end, and then to call every man happy, not because he is, but because he has been, happy, how can it be otherwise than absurd, if, when he is happy, the thing which really exists in him shall be unable to be truly said of him, because we do not choose to call living men happy on account of the changes of life, and because we have in our minds conceived happiness to be something permanent, and by no means easily admitting of change, and because good and evil fortune come frequently round to the same persons? For it is clear, that if we constantly attend to the chances of fortune, we shall frequently call the same man at one time happy, and at another miserable, exhibiting the happy man as a kind of chameleon, and as placed upon an insecure foundation.

Or is this following of the accidents of fortune in no way right? for goodness and badness do not depend upon these, but human life, as we said, stands in need of external goods as additions; but virtuous energies are the essential constituents of happiness, and the contrary energies of the contrary to happiness. But the question we have just started bears testimony to the definition; for stability does not exist in any human thing so much as in virtuous energies; for these seem to be more permanent even than the sciences, and the most honourable of these are likewise the most stable, because happy men most frequently and most constantly pass their lives in them; for this seems to be the reason why there is no forgetfulness of them. Therefore, the thing which we are in search of will exist in the happy man, and throughout his life he will be of this character; for he always, or most of all men, will live in the practice and contemplation of virtuous actions, and he will bear the accidents of fortune most nobly, and in every case, and altogether suitably, as a man in reality good, and a

faultless cube.[1] But since the accidents of fortune are numerous, and differ in greatness and smallness, small instances of good fortune, and likewise of the opposite, clearly will not influence the balance of life; but great and numerous accidents, if on the side of good fortune, will make life more happy, for they naturally unite in giving additional embellishment, and the use of them becomes honourable and good; but if they happen on the other side, they crush and spoil the happiness; for they bring on sorrows, and are impediments to many energies. But nevertheless, even in these, the honourable is conspicuous, whenever a man bears with equanimity many and great misfortunes, not from insensibility, but because he is high-spirited and magnanimous.

But if the energies are the essential constituents of the happiness or the misery of life, as we said, no happy man can ever become miserable; for he will never do hateful and worthless actions; for we conceive that the man who is in reality good and wise, bears every accident of fortune in a becoming manner, and always acts in the most honourable manner that the circumstances admit of, just as the good general makes the most skilful use of the army he has, and the good shoemaker of the skins that are given him makes the most elegant shoe, and all other artificers in the same manner. But if this is the case, the happy man can never become miserable; yet he would not be perfectly blessed, if he were to be involved in calamities like Priam's. Not that for this reason he is variable, or easily liable to change; for he will neither be moved from his happiness easily, nor by common misfortunes, but only by great and numerous ones; and after these, he cannot become happy again in a short time: but if he does at all, it will be after the lapse of some long and perfect period of time, having in the course of it successfully attained to great and honourable things. What then hinders us from calling that man happy, who energizes according to perfect virtue, and is sufficiently furnished with external goods, and that not for a short time, but for the full period of his life? Or must we add, that he is to go on living in the same manner, and die accordingly, since the future is to us invisible? But happiness we set down as in every way and altogether the end, and perfect. But if this be true, we shall call those men blessed amongst the living, in whom the things we have mentioned exist, and will continue to exist, but only blessed as men.

* * *

THEOPHRASTUS

THEOPHRASTUS (382?-287? B.C.) was the follower of Aristotle and succeeded him at the Lyceum. During the thirty-five years that he

[1] A good man is compared to a cube, as being the emblem of perfection.

presided over the Peripatetic School he was keenly observant of the men that he saw around him and in his thirty *Characters* we have the results of that observation. In a few lines he fixed the salient features of some of the mean and sordid types that were to be found in Athens at the beginning of the third century B.C., and these unflattering portraits form a useful corrective to the roseate and romantic views of Athens which we are apt to borrow from some of our more recent writers. The "character," as a special development of the essay, has been adopted by many later writers—notably Hall, Overbury, Breton, and Fuller in England; and La Bruyère and Vauvenargues in France.

SOME "CHARACTERS"

I. THE TACTLESS MAN

TACTLESSNESS makes a chance meeting tiresome. The Tactless Man is the kind of person who will go up to some one who is busy and start talking about himself; he will get up a party for his beloved when she is ill; he will come to give evidence when the trial is over. When he is a guest at a wedding he has not a good word to say for womankind; he invites people who have just come off a long journey to go for a walk. He is very good too at bringing you a better offer as soon as you have sold what you want to sell; he gets up and tells a long story you have already heard till you know it by heart; and he loves to take upon himself things you would rather not have done but don't like to refuse; just when you are obliged to spend a lot of money he comes to demand his interest. If he happens to be there when a slave is being flogged he will tell you how once a slave of his was flogged like that and then hanged himself; if he takes part in an arbitration he sets both parties by the ears, even though they want to come to an understanding.

II. THE BUSYBODY

The Busybody seems to be the kind of well-meaning person who is always doing and saying things that are no business of his.

The Busybody is the kind of man who gets up and promises things he cannot do; when something is settled and agreed upon he objects, and is finally proved to be wrong; he makes the slave mix more wine than the guests can drink; if he sees two men fighting he separates them even though he doesn't know them; he volunteers to show the way and then cannot find it. On military service he goes up to the commanding officer and asks him when he intends to give battle and what the orders will be for the day after to-morrow. If you are ill

and the doctor has forbidden wine he will say he wants to try an experiment and nearly drown you in it. If a woman dies he has engraved on her tombstone the names of her husband, her father, and her mother, as well as her own name and place of birth, and on top of that will add: "These were all excellent people."

III. THE BORE

The art of being a Bore consists in pouring out a flood of aimless talk. The Bore is the kind of person who will sit down next some one he doesn't know and start praising his own wife; then he tells a dream he had last night and goes on to describe everything he ate for dinner. Then, when he really gets going, he will say: "The men of the present day aren't a patch on their grandfathers. The price of wheat has gone down very much in the market. What a lot of visitors there are in town. Of course the sea is nice for travelling and not stormy after March, but some rain would do a lot of good. I mean to farm my own land next year—but it's very hard to live. I was ill yesterday—and by the way, what day of the month is it?" And so on; if you put up with him he will never stop.

* * *

PLUTARCH

PLUTARCH's fame as a biographer has tended to obscure the excellence of his work as an essayist. Yet the mass of work which is generally lumped together as "miscellaneous essays" shows the same bright and entertaining qualities, the same love of anecdote and detail which constitute the charm of the more famous *Lives*. His active interest in humanity and his simplicity of style save him from dullness. Plutarch lived (A.D. 40-120) at Chaeronen, a small town to the north-west of Athens.

The following essay from the *Morals* is reprinted from the translation by T. G. Tucker in *Selected Essays of Plutarch*, by permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

CONCERNING BUSYBODIES

IF A house is stuffy, dark, chilly, or unhealthy, it is perhaps best to get out of it. But if long association makes you fond of the place, you may alter the lights, shift the stairs, open a door here and close one there, and so make it brighter, fresher, and more wholesome. Even cities have sometimes been improved by such rearrangement.

For instance, it is said that my own native town, which used to face the west and receive the full force of the afternoon sun from Parnassus, was turned by Chairon so as to front the east. Empedocles, the natural philosopher, once blocked up a mountain gorge, which sent a destructive and pestilential south wind blowing down upon the plains. By this means, it was thought, he shut the plague out of the district.

Well, since there are certain injurious and unhealthy states of mind which chill and darken the soul, it would be best to get rid of them—to make a clean sweep to the foundations, and give ourselves the benefit of a clear sky, light, and pure air to breathe. If not, we should reform and readjust them by turning them some other way about.

We may take the vice of the busybody as an instance in point. It is a love of prying into other people's troubles, a disease tainted—we may believe—with both envy and malice.

> Why so sharp-eyed, my most malignant Sir,
> For others' faults, yet overlook your own?

Pray turn your pryingness the other way about, and make it face inwards. If you are so fond of the business of inquiring into defects, you will find plenty to occupy you at home.

"Abundant as leaves on the oak or the water that rolls from Alizon" will you find the errors in your conduct, the disorders in your heart and mind, and the lapses in your duty.

According to Xenophon, a good householder has a special place for the utensils of sacrifice, and a special place for those of the table; agricultural implements are stored in one room, weapons of war in another. In your own case you have one stock of faults arising from envy, another from jealousy, another from cowardice, another from meanness. These are the faults for you to inspect and examine. Block up the windows and alleys of your inquisitiveness on the side towards your neighbours, and open others which look into your own house—the male quarters, the female quarters, the living-rooms of the servants. Our busy curiosity will find occupation of a profitable and salutary, instead of a useless and malicious, kind, if each one will say to himself:

> How have I err'd? What deed have I done? What duty neglected?

As it is, we are all of us like the Lamia in the fable, of whom we are told that at home she is asleep and blind, with her eyes stowed away in a jar, but that when she comes abroad she puts them in and can see. Outside, and in dealing with others, we furnish our malice with an eye in the shape of our meddlesomeness, but we are continually being tripped up by our own misdeeds and vices, of which we are unaware, because we provide ourselves with no light or vision to perceive them. It follows that the busybody is a better friend to his enemies than to himself. While censoriously reproving their short-

comings and showing them what they ought to avoid or amend, he is so taken up with faults outside that he overlooks most of those at home.

Odysseus refused even to talk to his mother, until he had got his answer from the seer concerning the business which had brought him to Hades. When he had received the information, he turned to her, and also began to put questions to the other women, asking who Tyro was, and the beautiful Chloris, and why Epicaste met her death by

Tying a sheer-hung noose from the height of the lofty roof-tree.

Not so we. While treating our own concerns with the greatest indifference, ignorance, and neglect, we begin discussing other people's pedigrees—how our neighbour's grandfather was a Syrian and his grandmother a Thracian. "So-and-So owes more than seven hundred pounds, and cannot pay the interest." We also make it our business to inquire about such matters as where So-and-So got his wife from, and what private talk was that between A and B in the corner. Socrates, on the other hand, went about inquiring, "By what arguments did Pythagoras carry conviction?" So Aristippus, when he met Ischomachus at Olympia, proceeded to ask by what kind of conversation Socrates affected the Athenians as he did. When he had gleaned a few seeds or samples of his talk, he was so moved that he suffered a physical collapse, and became quite pale and thin. In the end he set sail for Athens, and slaked his thirst with draughts from the fountain-head, studying the man, his discourses and his philosophy, of which the aim was to recognize one's own vices and get rid of them.

But there are some to whom their own life is a most distressing spectacle, and who therefore cannot bear to look at it nor to reflect the light of reason upon themselves. Their soul is so fraught with all manner of vices, that, shuddering with horror at what lies within, it darts away from home, and goes prowling round other men's concerns, where it lets its malice batten and grow fat.

It often happens that a domestic fowl, though there is plenty of food lying at its disposal, will slink into a corner and scratch

Whereso appeareth, mayhap, one barley-grain in a dunghill.

It is much the same with the busybody. Ignoring the topics and questions which are open to all, and which no one prevents him from asking about or is annoyed with him if he does ask, he goes picking out of every house the troubles which it is endeavouring to bury out of sight. But surely it was a neat answer which the Egyptian made to the man who asked him what he was carrying in that wrapper. "That," said he, "is why it *is* in a wrapper." And why, pray, are you so inquisitive about a thing which is being concealed? If it had not been something undesirable, there would have been no concealment. It is not usual to walk into another man's house without knocking at the door. Nowa-

days there are doorkeepers—formerly knockers were beaten upon the doors in order to give warning—the intention being that the stranger shall not surprise the lady of the house or her daughter in the open, or come upon a slave receiving punishment, or the handmaids screaming. But these are exactly the things which the busybody steals in to see. At a staid and quiet household he would have no pleasure in looking, even if he were invited. His object is to uncover and make public those things to which keys, bolts, and the street-door owe their existence. "The winds which vex us most," says Ariston, "are those which pull up our cloaks." But the busybody strips off not only our mantles and tunics, but our walls; he spreads our doors wide open, and makes his way like a piercing wind through the "maiden of tender skin," prying and sneaking into her bacchic revels, her dances, and her all-night festivals.

As Cleon in the comedy had

His hands in Askthorpe and his thoughts in Thefton,

so the busybody's thoughts are at one and the same time in the houses of the rich and the hovels of the poor, in the courts of kings and the chambers of the newly-wed. He searches into everybody's business—business of strangers, and business of potentates. Nor is his search without danger. If one were to take a taste of aconite because he was inquisitive as to its properties, he would find that he had killed the learner before he got his lesson. So those who pry into the troubles of the great destroy themselves before discovering what they seek. If anyone is not satisfied with the beams which the sun lavishes so abundantly upon all, but audaciously insists upon gazing unabashed at the orb itself and probing the light to its heart, the result is blindness. It was therefore wise of Philippides, the comic poet, when King Lysimachus once asked him, "What can I give you of mine?" to reply, "Anything, Sire, but your secrets." The finest and most pleasant aspects of royalty are those displayed outwardly—its banquets, wealth, pomps and shows, graces and favours. But if a king has any secret, keep away from it and leave it alone. A king does not conceal his joy when prosperous, nor his laughter when jocose, nor his intention to do a kindness or confer a boon. When he hides a thing, when he is glum, unsmiling, unapproachable, it is time for alarm. It means that he has been storing up anger, and that it is festering; or that he is sullenly meditating a severe punishment; or that he is jealous of his wife, or suspicious of his son, or distrustful of a friend. Run, run from that cloud which is gathering so black! You cannot possibly miss the thunder and lightning, when the matter which is now a secret bursts out in storm.

How, then, are we to escape this vice? By turning our inquisitiveness—as we have said—the other way round, and, as far as possible,

directing our minds to better and more interesting objects. If you are to pry, pry into questions connected with sky, earth, air, or sea. You are by nature fond of looking either at little things or at big things. If at big things, apply your curiosity to the sun; ask where he sets and whence he rises. Inquire into the changes of the moon, as if she were a human being. Ask where she loses so much of her light, and whence she gets it back; how

> Once dim, she first comes forth and makes
> Her young face beauteous, gathering to the full,
> And, when her greatest splendours she hath shown,
> Fades out, and passes into naught again.

These, too, are secrets—the secrets of Nature; but Nature has no grievance against those who find them out. Are the big things beyond you? Then pry into the smaller ones. Ask how it is that some plants are always flourishing and green, proudly displaying their wealth at every season, while others are at one moment as good as these, but at another have squandered their abundance all at once, like some human spendthrift, and are left bare and beggared. Why, again, do some plants produce elongated fruits, some angular, some round and globe-like?

But perhaps you will have no curiosity for such concerns, because there is nothing wrong about them. Well, if inquisitiveness absolutely must be always browsing and passing its time among things sordid, like a maggot among dead matter, let us introduce it to history and story, and supply it with bad things in abundance and without stint. For there it will find

> Fallings of men and spurnings-off of life,

seductions of women, assaults by slaves, slanderings of friends, concoctions of poisons, envies, jealousies, shipwrecks of homes, overthrows of rulers. Take your fill, enjoy yourself, and cause no annoyance or pain to any of those with whom you come in contact.

Apparently, however, inquisitiveness finds no pleasure in scandals which are stale; it wants them hot and fresh. And while it enjoys the spectacle of a novel tragedy, it takes no sort of interest in the comedy or more cheerful side of life. Consequently the busybody lends but a careless and indifferent ear to the account of a wedding, a sacrifice, or a complimentary "farewell." He says he has already heard most of the details, and urges the narrator to cut them short or omit them. But if anyone will sit by him and tell him the news about the corruption of a girl or the unfaithfulness of a wife or an impending action at law or a quarrel between brothers, there is no sleepiness or hurry about him, but

> More words still doth he ask, and proffers his ears to receive them.

As applied to the busybody, the words

> How much more apt to reach the ear of man
> An ill thing than a happy!

are a true saying. As a cupping-glass sucks from the flesh what is worst in it, so the inquisitive ear draws to itself the most undesirable topics. To vary the figure: cities have certain "Accursed" or "Dismal" gates, through which they take out criminals on their way to death and throw the refuse and offscourings of purification, while nothing sacred or undefiled goes in or out through them. So with the ears of the busybody. They give passage to nothing fine or useful, but serve only as the pathway of gruesome communications, with their load of foul and polluted gossip.

> No chance brings other minstrel to my roof,
> But always Lamentation.

That is the one Muse and Siren of the busybody, the most pleasant of all music to his ear. For his vice is a love of finding out whatever is secret and concealed, and no one conceals a good thing when he has one; on the contrary, he will pretend to one which has no existence. Since therefore it is troubles that the busybody is eager to discover, the disease from which he suffers is malignant gloating—own brother to envy and spite. For envy is pain at another's good; malignity is pleasure at another's harm; and the parent of both is ill-nature—the feeling of a savage or a brute beast.

So painful do we all find it to have our troubles revealed, that there are many who would rather die than tell a physician of a secret disease. Imagine Herophilus or Erasistratus, or Asclepius himself—when he was a mortal man—calling from house to house with his drugs and his instruments, and asking whether a man had a fistula or a woman a cancer in the womb! Inquisitiveness in their profession may, it is true, save a life. None the less, I presume, every one would have scouted such a person, for coming to investigate other people's ailments without waiting till he was required and sent for. Yet our busybody searches out precisely these, or even worse, ailments; and, since he does so not by way of curing them, but merely of disclosing them, he deserves the hatred he gets.

We are annoyed and indignant with the collector of customs, not when he picks out and levies on those articles which we import openly, but when, in the search for hidden goods, he ransacks among baggage and merchandise which are not in question. Yet the law permits him to do so, and he is the loser if he does not. On the other hand, the busybody lets his own concerns go to ruin, while he is occupying himself with those of other people. He rarely takes a walk to the farm; it is too lonely, and he cannot bear the quiet and silence. And if, after

a time, he does chance along, he has a keener eye for his neighbour's vines than for his own. He proceeds to ask how many of his neighbour's cattle have died, or how much of his wine turned sour. After a good meal of such news he is quickly off and away.

Your true and genuine type of farmer has no desire to hear even the news which finds its own way from the city. Says he:

> Then, while he digs, he'll tell
> The terms o' the treaty. He must now, confound him,
> Go round and poke his nose in things like that!

But to your busybody country life is a stale and uninteresting thing with nothing to fuss about. He therefore flees from it, and pushes into the Exchange, the Market, or the Harbour. "Is there any news?" "Why, weren't you at market early this morning?" "Do you imagine there has been a revolution in three hours?" If, however, anyone has a piece of news to tell, down he gets from his horse, grasps the man's hand, kisses him, and stands there listening. But if some one meets him and says there is nothing fresh, he exclaims, as if he were annoyed: "What? Haven't you been at market? Haven't you been near the Board-room? And haven't you met the new arrivals from Italy?"

The Locrian magistrates therefore did right in fining anyone who, after being out of town, came up and asked, "Is there any news?" As the butchers pray for a good supply of animals, and fishermen for a good supply of fish, so busybodies pray for a good supply of calamities, for plenty of troubles, for novelties and changes. They must always have their fish to catch or carcass to cut up.

Another good rule was that of the legislator of Thurii, who forbade the lampooning of citizens on the stage, with the exception of adulterers and busybodies. The one class bears a resemblance to the other, adultery being a sort of inquisitiveness into another's pleasure, and a prying search into matters protected from the general eye, while inquisitiveness is the illicit denuding and corrupting of a secret. While a natural consequence of much learning is having much to say, and therefore Pythagoras enjoined upon the young a five years' silence, which he called "Truce to Speech," the necessary concomitant of curiosity is speaking evil. What the curious delight to hear, they delight to talk about; what they take pains to gather from others, they joy in giving out to new hearers. It follows that, besides its other drawbacks, their disease actually stands in the way of its own desires. For every one is on his guard to hide things from them, and is reluctant to do anything when the busybody is looking, or to say anything when he is listening. People put off a consultation and postpone the consideration of business until such persons are out of the way. If, when a secret matter is towards, or an important action is in the doing, a busybody appears upon the scene, they take it away

and hide it, as they would a piece of victuals when the cat comes past. Often, therefore, he is the only person not permitted to hear or see what others may see and hear.

For the same reason the busybody can find no one to trust him. We would rather trust our letters, papers, or seals to a slave or a stranger than to an inquisitive relation or friend. Bellerophon, though the writing which he carried was about himself, would not broach it, but showed the same continence in keeping his hands off the king's letter as in keeping them off his wife.

Yes, inquisitiveness is as incontinent as adultery, and not only incontinent, but terribly silly and foolish. To pass by so many women who are public property, and to struggle to get at one who is kept under lock and key, who is expensive, and perhaps ugly to boot, is the very height of insanity. The busybody is just as bad. He passes by much that is admirable to see and hear, many an excellent discourse or discussion, to dig into another man's poor little letter or clap his ear to his neighbour's wall, listening to slaves and womenfolk whispering together, and incurring danger often, and discredit always.

Well, if he wishes to get rid of his vice, the busybody will find nothing so helpful as to think over the discoveries he has hitherto made. Simonides used to say that, in opening his boxes after a lapse of time, he found the fee-box always full and the thanks-box always empty. So, if one were to open the store-room of inquisitiveness after an interval, and to contemplate all the useless, futile, and uninviting things with which it is filled, he would probably become sick of the business, so nauseating and senseless would it appear.

Suppose a person to run over the works of our old writers and pick out their faultiest passages, compiling and keeping a book full of such things as "headless" lines of Homer, solecisms in the tragedians, the indecent and licentious language to women by which Archilochus made a sorry show of himself. Does he not deserve the execration in the tragedy:

> Perish, thou picker-up of miseries!

Execration apart, his treasury, filled with other men's faults, possesses neither beauty nor use. It is like the town which Philip founded with the rudest riff-raff, and which he called Knaveborough.

With the busybody, however, it is not from lines of poetry, but from lives, that he goes gleaning and gathering blunders and slips and solecisms, till the memory which he carries about is the dullest and dreariest record-box, crammed with ugly things.

At Rome there are those who set no store by the paintings, the statues, or—failing these—the handsome children or women on sale, but who haunt the monster-market, examining specimens with no calves

to their legs, or with weasel-elbows, three eyes, or ostrich-heads, and looking out for the appearance of any

> Commingled shape and misformed prodigy.

Yet if you keep on showing them such sights, they will soon become surfeited and sick of it all. In the same way those who make it their business to pry into other people's failures in their affairs, blots on their pedigree, disturbances and delinquencies in their homes, will do well to remind themselves how thankless and unprofitable their previous discoveries have proved.

The most effective way, however, of preventing this weakness is to form a habit—to begin at an early stage and train ourselves systematically to acquire the necessary self-control. It is by habit that the vice increases, the advance of the disease being gradual. How this is, we shall see, in discussing the proper method of practice.

Let us make a beginning with comparatively trifling and insignificant matters.

On the roads it can be no difficult matter to abstain from reading the inscriptions on the tombs. Nor in the promenades can there be any hardship in refusing to let the eye linger upon the writings on the walls. You have only to tell yourself that they contain nothing useful or entertaining. There is A expressing his "kind sentiments" towards B; So-and-So described as "the best of friends"; and much mere twaddle of the same kind. No doubt it seems as if the reading of them does you no harm; but harm you it does, without your knowing it, by inducing a habit of inquiring into things which do not concern you. Hunters do not permit young hounds to turn aside and follow up every scent, but pull them sharply back with the leash, so as to keep their power of smell in perfectly clean condition for their proper work, and make it stick more keenly to the tracks:

> With nostril a-search for the trail that the beast gives forth from its body.

The same watchfulness must be shown in suppressing, or in diverting to useful ends, the tendency of an inquisitive person to run off the track and wander after everything that he can see or hear. An eagle or a lion gathers its talons in when it walks, so as not to wear the sharp edge from their tips. Similarly let us treat the inquiring spirit as the keen edge to our love of learning, and refrain from wasting or blunting it upon objects of no value.

In the next place let us train ourselves, when passing another's door, to refrain from looking in, or from letting our inquisitive gaze clutch at what is passing inside. Xenocrates said—and we shall do well to keep the remark in mind—that whether we set foot or set

eyes in another man's house makes no difference. Not only is such prying unfair and improper; we get no pleasure from the spectacle.

> Unsightly, stranger, are the sights within,

is a saying which is generally true of what we see inside—a litter of pots and pans, or servant-girls sitting about, but nothing of any importance or interest. This furtive throwing of sidelong glances, which at the same time gives a kind of squint to the mind, is ugly, and the habit of it demoralizing. When the Olympian victor Dioxippus was making a triumphal entry in a chariot, and could not drag his eyes from a beautiful woman among the spectators, but kept turning half round and throwing side glances in her direction, Diogenes—who saw it all—remarked, "See how a bit of a girl gets the neck-grip of our great athlete!" Inquisitive people, however, are to be seen gripped by the neck and twisted about by any kind of sight, when they once develop a habit of squandering their glances in all directions.

This is assuredly no right use of the faculty of vision. It should not go gadding about like some ill-trained maid-servant; but when the mind sends it upon an errand, it should make haste to reach its destination, deliver its message, and then come quietly home again to wait upon the commands of the reason. Instead of this, the case is as in Sophocles:

> Thereon the Ænean driver's hard-mouthed colts
> Break from control.

When the faculty of vision has not been tutored and trained in the proper manner as above described, it runs away, drags the mind with it, and often brings it into disastrous collisions.

There is a story that Democritus deliberately destroyed his sight by fixing his eyes upon a red-hot mirror and allowing its heat to be focussed upon them. His object, it is said, was to block up the windows towards the street, and thus prevent the disturbance of his intellect by repeated calls from outside, enabling it to stay at home and devote itself to pure thinking. Though the story is a fiction, nothing is more true than that those who make most use of their mind make few calls upon the senses. Note how our halls of learning are built far out from the towns, and how night has been styled the *"well-minded,"* from a belief that quiet and the absence of distraction are a powerful aid to intellectual discovery and research.

Suppose, again, that people are quarrelling and abusing each other in the market-place. It requires no great effort of self-denial to keep at a distance. When a crowd is running towards a certain spot, it is easy for you to remain seated, or else, if you lack the necessary strength of mind, to get up and go away. There is no advantage to be got from mixing yourself with busybodies, whereas you will derive great benefit

from putting a forcible check upon your curiosity and training it to obey the commands of the reason.

We may now go a step further, and tax ourselves more severely. It is good practice, when a successful entertainment is going on in a public hall, to pass it by; when our friends invite us to a performance by a dancer or comedian, to decline; when there is a roar in the race-ground or the circus, to take no notice. Socrates used to urge the avoidance of all foods and drinks which tempt one to eat when he is not hungry or to drink when he is not thirsty. In the same way we shall do well to shun carefully all appeals to eye or ear, when, though they are no business of ours, their attractions prove too much for us.

Cyrus refused to see Panthea, and when Araspes talked of her remarkable beauty, his answer was: "All the more reason for keeping away from her. If I took your advice and went to see her, she might perhaps tempt me to be visiting her again when I could not spare the time, and to be sitting and looking at her to the neglect of much important business." In the same way Alexander refused to set eyes on Darius' wife, who was said to be strikingly handsome. Though he visited the mother—an elderly woman—he would not bring himself to see her young and beautiful daughter. But what we do is to peep into women's litters and hang about their windows, finding nothing improper in encouraging our curiosity and allowing it such dangerous and unchecked play.

Note how you may train yourself for other virtues. To learn justice you should sometimes forgo an honest gain, and so accustom yourself to keep aloof from dishonest ones. Similarly, to learn continence, you should sometimes hold aloof from your own wife, and so secure yourself against temptation from another's. Apply this habit to inquisitiveness. Endeavour occasionally to miss hearing or seeing things which concern yourself. When something happens at home, and a person wishes to tell you of it, put the matter off; and when things have been said which appear to affect yourself, refuse to hear them. Remember how Oedipus was brought into the direst disasters by over-curiosity. Finding he was no Corinthian, but an alien, he set to work to discover who he was, and so he met with Laius. He killed him, married his own mother, with the throne for dowry, and then, while apparently blessed by fortune, began his search once more. The endeavours of his wife to prevent him only made him question still more closely, and in the most peremptory way, the old man who was in the secret. And at last, when circumstances are already bringing him to suspect, and the old man cries:

> Alas! I stand on the dread brink of speech!

he is nevertheless in such a blaze or spasm of passion that he replies:

> And I of hearing; and yet hear I must.

So bitter-sweet, so uncontrollable, is the excitement of curiosity—like the tickling of a wound, at which one tears till he makes it bleed. Meanwhile if we are free from that malady, and mild by nature, we shall ignore a disagreeable thing and say:

Sovran Oblivion, how wise art thou!

We must therefore train ourselves to this end. If a letter is brought to us, we must not show all that hurry and eagerness to open it which most people display, when they bite the fastenings through with their teeth, if their hands are too slow. When a messenger arrives from somewhere or other, we must not run to meet him, nor get up from our seats. If a friend says, "I have something new to tell you," let us reply: "Better, if you have something useful or profitable." When I was once lecturing at Rome, the famous Rusticus—who was afterwards put to death by Domitian out of jealousy at his reputation—was among my hearers. A soldier came through the audience and handed him a note from the emperor. There was a hush, and I made a pause, to allow of his reading the letter. This, however, he refused to do, nor would he open it, until I had finished my discourse and the audience broke up. The incident caused universal admiration at his dignified behaviour.

But when one feeds his inquisitiveness upon permissible material until he makes it robust and headstrong, he no longer finds it easy to master, when force of habit urges it towards forbidden ground. Such persons will stealthily open their friends' missives, will push their way into a confidential meeting, will get a view of rites which it is an impiety to see, will tread in hallowed places, and will pry into the doings and sayings of a king.

Now with a despot—who is compelled to know everything—there is nothing that makes him so detested as the crew known as his "ears" and "jackals." "Listeners" were first instituted by Darius the Younger, who had no confidence in himself and looked upon every one with fear and suspicion. "Jackals" were the creation of the Dionysii, who distributed them among the people of Syracuse. Naturally, when the revolution came, these were the first to be seized and cudgelled to death by the Syracusans.

Blackmailers and informers are a breed belonging to the Busybody clan; they are members of the family. But, whereas the informer looks to see if his neighbours have done or plotted any mischief, the busybody brings to book and drags into public even the misfortunes for which they are not responsible. It is said that the outcast derived his name of *aliterios* in the first instance from being a busybody. It appears that when a severe famine once occurred at Athens, and when those who were in possession of wheat, instead of bringing it in to the public stock, used to grind it (*alein*) secretly by night in their houses,

certain persons, who went round watching for the noise of the mills, were in consequence called *aliterioi*. It was in the same way, we are told, that the informer won his name of *sykophantes*. The export of figs (*syka*) being prohibited, those who gave information (*phainein*) and impeached the offenders were called *sykophantai*. Busybodies would do well to reflect upon this fact. It may make them ashamed of the family likeness between their own practices and those of a class which is a special object of loathing and anger.

* * *

EPICTETUS

It was in the *Stoa Pœcile*, or Painted Porch, at Athens that Zeno met his followers and founded the school which was afterward to take its name from the place where these select spirits met. One of the most famous of later Stoics was Epictetus (fl. A.D. 60) who was originally a slave and afterward, in the reign of Domitian, became a teacher of philosophy in Rome. He left nothing in writing but his lectures were compiled by Arrian in eight books. Of these only four now exist.

The following passage is taken from T. W. Rolleston's translation of the *Discourses* by Mrs. Rolleston's permission.

COURAGE AND CAUTION

WHAT is asserted by the philosophers, may, perhaps, appear a paradox to some: let us, however, examine, as well as we can, whether this be true: that it is possible in all things, to act at once with caution and courage. For caution seems, in some measure, contrary to courage: and contraries are by no means consistent. The appearance of a paradox to many, in the present case, seems to me to arise from something like this: if, indeed, we assert, that courage and caution are to be used, in the same instances, we should justly be accused of uniting contradictions: but, in the way that we affirm it, where is the absurdity? For, if what hath been so often said, and so often demonstrated, be certain, that the essence of good and evil consists in the use of the appearances; and that things independent on choice, are not of the nature either of good or evil; what paradox do the philosophers assert, if they say: "Where things are not dependent on choice, be courageous: where they are, be cautious"? For in these only, if evil consists in a bad choice, is caution to be used. And if things independent on choice, and not in our power, are nothing to us, in these we are to make use of courage. Thus we shall be at once cautious and

courageous: and, indeed, courageous on the account of this very caution; for by using caution, with regard to things really evil, we shall gain courage, with regard to what are not so.

But we are in the same condition as [hunted] deer: when these, in a fright, fly from the feathers,[1] where do they turn, and to what do they retire for safety? To the toils. And thus they are undone, by inverting the objects of fear and confidence. Thus we, too. In what instances do we make use of fear? In things independent on choice. In what, on the other hand, do we behave with courage, as if there were nothing to be dreaded? In things dependent on choice. To be deceived then, or to act rashly or impudently, or to indulge a scandalous desire, is of no importance to us, if we do but take a good aim, in things independent on choice. But where death, or exile, or pain, or ignominy, are concerned, there is the retreat, there, the flutter and fright. Hence, as it must be with those who err in matters of the greatest importance, what is naturally courage, we render bold, desperate, rash, and imprudent: and what is naturally caution, timid and base, and full of fears and perturbations. For if a person was to transfer caution to choice, and the actions of choice, by a willingness to be cautious, he will, at the same time, have it in his power to avoid [what he guards against:] but if he transfers it to things not in our power, or choice, by fixing his aversion on what is not in our own power, but dependent on others, he will necessarily fear; he will be hurried; will be disturbed. For it is not death, or pain, that is to be feared; but the fear of pain or death. Hence we commend him who says:

Death is no ill, but shamefully to die.

Courage, then, ought to be opposed to death, and caution to the fear of death: whereas we, on the contrary, oppose to death, flight; and to our principle concerning it, carelessness, and desperateness, and indifference.

Socrates used, very properly, to call these things vizards: for, as masks appear shocking and formidable to children, from their inexperience; we are affected in like manner, with regard to things, for no other reason, than as children are, with regard to vizards. For what is a child? Ignorance. What is a child? Want of learning: for, so far as the knowledge of children extends, they are not inferior to us. What is death? A vizard. Turn it, and be convinced. See, it doth not bite. This little body and spirit must be separated (as they formerly were) either now, or hereafter: why, then, are you displeased if

[1] This was a kind of scarecrow, formed of different coloured feathers, by which the animal was terrified, and so driven into the net: which was the ancient manner of hunting.

it be now? For if not now, it will be hereafter. Why? To complete the revolution of the world: for that hath need of some things present, others to come, and others already completed. What is pain? A vizard. Turn it, and be convinced.

This paltry flesh is sometimes affected by harsh, sometimes by smooth impressions. If suffering be not worth your while, the door is open; if it be, bear it; for it was fit the door should be open, against all accidents. And thus we have no trouble.

What, then, is the fruit of these principles? What it ought to be; the most noble, and the most becoming the truly educated, tranquillity, security, freedom. For in this case, we are not to give credit to the many, who say that none ought to be educated but the free; but rather to the philosophers, who say that the well-educated alone are free.

How so?

Thus: is freedom anything else, than the power of living as we like?

Nothing else.

Well: tell me then, do you like to live in error?

We do not. No one, sure, that lives in error, is free.

Do you like to live in fear? Do you like to live in sorrow? Do you like to live in perturbation?

By no means.

No one, therefore, in a state of fear, or sorrow, or perturbation, is free: but whoever is delivered from sorrow, fear, and perturbation, by the same means is delivered likewise from slavery. How shall we believe you, then, good legislators, when you say: "We allow none to be educated but the free"? For the philosophers say: "We allow none to be free, but the liberally-educated": that is, God doth not allow it.

What, then, when any person hath turned his slave about before the consul,[1] hath he done nothing?

Yes, he hath.

What?

He hath turned his slave about, before the consul.

Nothing more?

Yes. He pays a fine for him.

Well then: is not the man, who hath gone through this ceremony, rendered free?

No more than [he is rendered] exempt from perturbation. Pray, have you, who are able to give this freedom to others, no master of your own? Are not you a slave to money? To a girl? To a boy? To

[1] When a slave was to be presented with his freedom, he was brought before the consul; and his master, taking him by the hand, pronounced a certain form of words, and then turned the slave about, who was thus rendered free. The fine which the master was to pay on this occasion, was applied to the public use.

—UPTON.

a tyrant? To some friend of a tyrant? Else, why do you tremble when any of these is in question? Therefore, I so often repeat to you, let this be your study; have this always at hand; in what it is necessary to be courageous, and in what cautious: courageous, in what doth not depend on choice; cautious, in what doth.

But have not I read my papers to you? Do not you know what I am doing? [1]

In what?

In my essays.

Show me in what state you are, as to desire and aversion. Whether you do not fail of what you wish, and incur what you would avoid: but, as to these commonplace essays, if you are wise, you will take them, and obliterate them.

Why, did not Socrates write?

Yes: who so much? But how? As he had not always one at hand, to argue against his principles, or be argued against in his turn, he argued with, and examined, himself; and always treated, at least, some one natural notion, in a manner fitted for the use of life. These are the things which a philosopher writes: but for such commonplace essays as those I am speaking of, he leaves to the insensible, or to the happy creatures whom idleness furnishes with leisure; or to such as are too weak to regard consequences. And will you, when you are gone from hence, which the time now calls for, be fond of showing, and reading, and be ridiculously conceited, of these things?

Pray see, how I compose dialogues.

Talk not of that, man; but rather be able to say: see, how I avoid being disappointed of my desire: see, how I secure myself against incurring my aversion. Set death before me; set pain, set a prison, set ignominy, set condemnation before me; and you will know me. This is the [proper] ostentation of a young man come out from the schools. Leave the rest to others. Let no one ever hear you utter a word about them; nor suffer it, if anyone commends you for them: but think that you are nobody, and that you know nothing. Appear to know only this, how you may never be disappointed of your desire; never incur your aversion. Let others study causes, problems, and syllogisms. Do you study death, chains, torture, exile: and all these, with courage, and reliance upon him, who hath called you to them, and judged you worthy a post, in which you may show what the rational governing faculty can do, when set in array against powers independent on the choice. And thus, this paradox becomes neither impossible, nor a paradox, that we must be at once cautious and courageous: courageous, in what doth not depend upon choice; and cautious, in what doth.

* * *

[1] This seems to be spoken by one of the scholars.

MARCUS AURELIUS

THE Emperor Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180) presents a conspicuous example of a man who could by strength of will preserve his serenity unruffled quite independently of circumstances. He was a follower of Epictetus and lectured on his doctrines. The meditations were composed in the midst of the tumult and confusion of a military camp. Pestilence and war wrought havoc around him; the cares of a great empire beset him; personal bereavement broke up his home life. Thus he was no comfortably-placed visionary prophesying smooth things. Even if we cannot attain to his serene sternness we are bound to admire its loftiness and firmness of purpose. Though a Roman, Marcus Aurelius wrote in Greek.

The following passage is taken from the translation by George Long.

THOUGHTS

BEGIN the morning by saying to thyself, I shall meet with the busybody, the ungrateful, arrogant, deceitful, envious, unsocial. All these things happen to them by reason of their ignorance of what is good and evil. But I who have seen the nature of the good that it is beautiful, and of the bad that it is ugly, and the nature of him who does wrong, that it is akin to me, not [only] of the same blood or seed, but that it participates in [the same] intelligence and [the same] portion of the divinity, I can neither be injured by any of them, for no one can fix on me what is ugly, nor can I be angry with my kinsman, nor hate him. For we are made for co-operation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another then is contrary to nature; and it is acting against one another to be vexed and to turn away.

Whatever this is that I am, it is a little flesh and breath, and the ruling part. Throw away thy books; no longer distract thyself: it is not allowed; but as if thou wast now dying, despise the flesh; it is blood and bones and a network, a contexture of nerves, veins, and arteries. See the breath also, what kind of a thing it is, air, and not always the same, but every moment sent out and again sucked in. The third then is the ruling part: consider thus: Thou art an old man; no longer let this be a slave, no longer be pulled by the strings like a puppet to unsocial movements, no longer be either dissatisfied with thy present lot, or shrink from the future.

All that is from the gods is full of providence. That which is from fortune is not separated from nature or without an interweaving and involution with the things which are ordered by providence. From

thence all things flow; and there is besides necessity, and that which is for the advantage of the whole universe, of which thou art a part. But that is good for every part of nature which the nature of the whole brings, and what serves to maintain this nature. Now the universe is preserved, as by the changes of the elements so by the changes of things compounded of the elements. Let these principles be enough for thee, let them always be fixed opinions. But cast away the thirst after books, that thou mayest not die murmuring, but cheerfully, truly, and from thy heart thankful to the gods.

Remember how long thou hast been putting off these things, and how often thou hast received an opportunity from the gods, and yet dost not use it. Thou must now at last perceive of what universe thou art a part, and of what administrator of the universe thy existence is an efflux, and that a limit of time is fixed for thee, which if thou dost not use for clearing away the clouds from thy mind, it will go and thou wilt go, and it will never return.

Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity, and feeling of affection, and freedom, and justice; and to give thyself relief from all other thoughts. And thou wilt give thyself relief, if thou doest every act of thy life as if it were the last, laying aside all carelessness and passionate aversion from the commands of reason, and all hypocrisy, and self-love, and discontent with the portion which has been given to thee. Thou seest how few the things are, the which if a man lays hold of, he is able to live a life which flows in quiet, and is like the existence of the gods; for the gods on their part will require nothing more from him who observes these things.

Do wrong to thyself, do wrong to thyself, my soul; but thou wilt no longer have the opportunity of honouring thyself. Every man's life is sufficient. But thine is nearly finished, though thy soul reverences not itself, but places thy felicity in the souls of others.

Do the things external which fall upon thee distract thee? Give thyself time to learn something new and good, and cease to be whirled around. But then thou must also avoid being carried about the other way. For those too are triflers who have wearied themselves in life by their activity, and yet have no object to which to direct every movement, and, in a word, all their thoughts.

Through not observing what is in the mind of another a man has seldom been seen to be unhappy; but those who do not observe the movements of their own minds must of necessity be unhappy.

This thou must always bear in mind, what is the nature of the whole, and what is my nature, and how this is related to that, and what kind of a part it is of what kind of a whole, and that there is no one who hinders thee from always doing and saying the things which are according to the nature of which thou art a part.

Theophrastus, in his comparison of bad acts—such a comparison as one would make in accordance with the common notions of mankind—says, like a true philosopher, that the offences which are committed through desire are more blamable than those which are committed through anger. For he who is excited by anger seems to turn away from reason with a certain pain and unconscious contraction; but he who offends through desire, being overpowered by pleasure, seems to be in a manner more intemperate and more womanish in his offences. Rightly, then, and in a way worthy of philosophy, he said that the offence which is committed with pleasure is more blamable than that which is committed with pain; and on the whole the one is more like a person who has been first wronged and through pain is compelled to be angry; but the other is moved by his own impulse to do wrong, being carried towards doing something by desire.

Since it is possible that thou mayest depart from life this very moment, regulate every act and thought accordingly. But to go away from among men, if there are gods, is not a thing to be afraid of, for the gods will not involve thee in evil; but if indeed they do not exist, or if they have no concern about human affairs, what is it to me to live in a universe devoid of gods or devoid of providence? But in truth they do exist, and they do care for human things, and they have put all the means in man's power to enable him not to fall into real evils. And as to the rest, if there was anything evil, they would have provided for this also, that it should be altogether in a man's power not to fall into it. Now that which does not make a man worse, how can it make a man's life worse? But neither through ignorance, nor having the knowledge, but not the power to guard against or correct these things, is it possible that the nature of the universe has overlooked them; nor is it possible that it has made so great a mistake, either through want of power or want of skill, that good and evil should happen indiscriminately to the good and the bad. But death certainly, and life, honour and dishonour, pain and pleasure, all these things equally happen to good men and bad, being things which make us neither better nor worse. Therefore they are neither good nor evil.

How quickly all things disappear, in the universe the bodies themselves, but in time the remembrance of them; what is the nature of all sensible things, and particularly those which attract with the bait of pleasure or terrify by pain, or are noised abroad by vapoury fame; how worthless, and contemptible, and sordid, and perishable, and dead they are—all this it is the part of the intellectual faculty to observe. To observe too who these are whose opinions and voices give reputation; what death is, and the fact that, if a man looks at it in itself, and by the abstractive power of reflection resolves into their parts all the things which present themselves to the imagination in it, he will

then consider it to be nothing else than an operation of nature; and if anyone is afraid of an operation of nature, he is a child. This, however, is not only an operation of nature, but it is also a thing which conduces to the purposes of nature. To observe too how man comes near to the deity, and by what part of him, and when this part of man is so disposed.

Nothing is more wretched than a man who traverses everything in a round, and pries into the things beneath the earth, as the poet says, and seeks by conjecture what is in the minds of his neighbours, without perceiving that it is sufficient to attend to the daemon within him, and to reverence it sincerely. And reverence of the daemon consists in keeping it pure from passion and thoughtlessness, and dissatisfaction with what comes from gods and men. For the things from the gods merit veneration for their excellence; and the things from men should be dear to us by reason of kinship; and sometimes even, in a manner, they move our pity by reason of man's ignorance of good and bad; this defect being not less than that which deprives us of the power of distinguishing things that are white and black.

Though thou shouldest be going to live three thousand years, and as many times ten thousand years, still remember that no man loses any other life than this which he now lives, nor lives any other than this which he now loses. The longest and shortest are thus brought to the same. For the present is the same to all, though that which perishes is not the same; and so that which is lost appears to be a mere moment. For a man cannot lose either the past or the future; for what a man has not, how can anyone take this from him? These two things then thou must bear in mind; the one, that all things from eternity are of like forms and come round in a circle, and that it makes no difference whether a man shall see the same things during a hundred years or two hundred, or an infinite time; and the second, that the longest liver and he who will die soonest lose just the same. For the present is the only thing of which a man can be deprived, if it is true that this is the only thing which he has, and that a man cannot lose a thing if he has it not.

Remember that all is opinion. For what was said by the Cynic Monimus is manifest: and manifest too is the use of what was said, if a man receives what may be got out of it as far as it is true.

The soul of man does violence to itself, first of all, when it becomes an abscess and, as it were, a tumour on the universe, so far as it can. For to be vexed at anything which happens is a separation of ourselves from nature, in some part of which the natures of all other things are contained. In the next place, the soul does violence to itself when it turns away from any man, or even moves towards him with the intention of injuring, such as are the souls of those who are angry. In the

third place, the soul does violence to itself when it is overpowered by pleasure or by pain. Fourthly, when it plays a part, and does or says anything insincerely and untruly. Fifthly, when it allows any act of its own and any movement to be without an aim, and does anything thoughtlessly and without considering what it is, it being right that even the smallest things be done with reference to an end; and the end of rational animals is to follow the reason and the law of the most ancient city and polity.

Of human life the time is a point, and the substance is in a flux, and the perception dull, and the composition of the whole body subject to putrefaction, and the soul a whirl, and fortune hard to divine, and fame a thing devoid of judgment. And, to say all in a word, everything which belongs to the body is a stream, and what belongs to the soul is a dream and vapour, and life is a warfare and a stranger's sojourn, and after-fame is oblivion. What then is that which is able to conduct a man? One thing and only one, philosophy. But this consists in keeping the daemon within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without a purpose, nor yet falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else than a dissolution of the elements of which every living being is compounded but if there is no harm to the elements themselves in each continually changing into another, why should a man have any apprehension about the change and dissolution of all the elements? For it is according to nature, and nothing is evil which is according to nature.

* * *

LUCIAN

The writings of this satirist and humorist have a strangely modern note. This delightful essay, in particular, is surprising in its point and freshness. Here we see Lucian in his most playful and amiable mood, but no writer has ever used the weapons of ridicule and invective with greater effect. He fearlessly exposed the weakness of paganism, never hesitating to condemn abuses whenever he saw them. By precept and example he worked unceasingly in the endeavour to introduce a purer Greek style. By birth Lucian (A.D. 125?-210?) was a Syrian, yet "he came to write the best Greek prose known since the days of Plato and Demosthenes."

The following essay is taken from the translation of Lucian by H. W. and F. G. Fowler, by permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

A SLIP OF THE TONGUE IN SALUTATION

IF A poor mortal has some difficulty in guarding against that spirit of mischief which dwells aloft, he has still more in clearing himself of the absurd consequences when that spirit trips him up. I am in both predicaments at once; coming to make you my morning salutation, which should have taken the orthodox form of "Rejoice," I bade you, in a very choice fit of absentmindedness, "Be healthy"—a good enough wish in its way, but a little untimely and unconnected with that early hour. I at once went moist and red, not quite aware whether I was on my head or my heels; some of the company took me for a lunatic, no doubt, some thought I was in my second childhood, some that I had not quite got over my last night's wine—though you yourself were the pink of good manners, not showing your consciousness of the slip by any ghost of a smile. It occurred to me to write to myself a little something in the way of comfort, and so modify the distress my blunder gave me—prove to myself that it was not absolutely unpardonable for an old man to transgress etiquette so flagrantly before so many witnesses. As to apology, there could be no occasion for that, when one's slip had resulted in so well-omened a wish.

I began to write expecting my task to be very difficult, but found plenty of material as I went on. I will defer it, however, till I have cleared the way with a few necessary remarks on the three forms—"Rejoice" or "Joy," "Prosper" or "Prosperity," "Hail" or "Health." "Joy" is a very ancient greeting; but it was not confined to the morning, or the first meeting. They did use it when they first saw one another:

> Joy to thee, Lord of this Tirynthian land!

But again at the moment when the wine succeeded to the meal:

> Achilles, Joy! We lack not fair repast—

so says Odysseus discharging his embassy. And even at parting:

> Joy be with you! And henceforth know me God,
> No longer mortal man.

In fact the apostrophe was not limited to any particular season, as now to the morning alone; indeed they used it on gloomy, nay, on the most lamentable occasions; in Euripides, Polynices ends his life with the words,

> Joy with you! for the darkness closes on me.

Nor was it necessarily significative of friendliness; it could express hatred and the determination to see no more of another. To wish much joy to, was a regular form for ceasing to care about.

The modern use of the word dates back to Philippides the dispatch-runner. Bringing the news of Marathon, he found the archons seated, in suspense regarding the issue of the battle. "Joy, we win!" he said, and died upon his message, breathing his last in the word "Joy." The earliest letter beginning with it is that in which Cleon the Athenian demagogue, writing from Sphacteria, sends the good news of his victory and capture of Spartans at that place. However, later than that we find Nicias writing from Sicily and keeping to the older custom of coming to business at once with no such introduction.

Now the admirable Plato, no bad authority on such matters, would have us reject the salutation "Joy" altogether; it is a mean wish, wanting in seriousness, according to him; his substitute is "Prosperity," which stands for a satisfactory condition both of body and soul; in a letter to Dionysius, he reproves him for commencing a hymn to Apollo with "Joy," which he maintains is unworthy of the Pythian, and not fit even for men of any discretion, not to mention Gods.

Pythagoras the mystic has vouchsafed us no writings of his own; but we may infer from his disciples, Ocellus the Lucanian and Archytas, for instance, that he headed his letters neither with "Joy" nor "Prosperity," but recommended beginning with "Hail." At any rate all the Pythagoreans in writing to one another (when their tone is serious, that is) started with wishing "Health," which they took to be the prime need of soul and body alike, and to include all human blessing. The Pentagram, that interlaced triple triangle which served them as a sort of password, they called by the name "Health." They argued that "Health" included "Joy" and "Prosperity," but that neither of those two was coextensive with "Health." Some of them gave to the Quaternion, which is their most solemn oath, and sums their perfect number, the name of Beginning of Health. Philolaus might be quoted.

But I need hardly go so far back. Epicurus assuredly rejoiced in joy—pleasure was the chief Good in his eyes; yet in his most earnest letters (which are not very numerous) and in those to his most intimate friends, he starts with "Hail." And in tragedy and the old comedy you will constantly find it used quite at the beginning. You remember,

> Hail to thee, joy be thine—

which puts health before rejoicing clearly enough. And says Alexis:

> All hail, my lord; after long time thou comest.

Again Achaeus:

> I come in sorry plight, yet wish thee health.

And Philemon:

> Health first I ask, and next prosperity,
> Joy thirdly, and to owe not any man.

As for the writer of the drinking-song mentioned in Plato, what says he?—"Best is health, and second beauty, and third wealth"; joy he never so much as names. I need hardly adduce the trite saw:

> Chief of them that blessings give,
> Health, with thee I mean to live.

But, if Health is chief, her gift, which is the enjoyment of health, should rank before other Goods.

I could multiply these examples by the thousand from poets, historians, philosophers, who give Health the place of honour; but you will not require any such childish pedantry of me, wiping out my original offence by another; I shall do better to add a historical anecdote or two which occur to me as relevant.

Eumenes of Cardia, writing to Antipater, states that just before the battle of Issus, Hephæstion came at dawn into Alexander's tent. Either in absence of mind and confusion like mine, or else under a divine impulse, he gave the evening salutation like me—"Hail, sire; 'tis time we were at our posts." All present were confounded at the irregularity, and Hephæstion himself was like to die of shame, when Alexander said, "I take the omen; it is a promise that we shall come back safe from battle."

Antiochus Soter, about to engage the Galatians, dreamed that Alexander stood over him and told him to give his men the password "Health"; and with this word it was that he won that marvellous victory.

Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, in a letter to Seleucus, just reversed the usual order, bidding him "Hail" at the beginning, and adding "Rejoice" at the end instead of wishing him "Health"; this is recorded by Dionysodorus, the collector of his letters.

The case of Pyrrhus the Epirot is well worth mention; as a general he was only second to Alexander, and he experienced a thousand vicissitudes of fortune. In all his prayers, sacrifices, and offerings, he never asked for victory or increase of his royal dignity, for fame or excessive wealth; his whole prayer was always in one word, "Health"; as long as he had that, he thought all else would come of itself. And it was true wisdom, in my opinion; he remembered that all other good things are worthless, if health is wanting.

Oh, certainly (says some one); but we have assigned each form to its proper place by this time; and if you disregard that—even though there was no bad meaning in what you did say—you cannot fairly claim to have made no mistake; it is as though one should put a hel-

met on the shins, or greaves on the head. My dear sir (I reply), your simile would go on all fours if there were any season at all which did not require health; but in point of fact it is needed in the morning and at noonday and at night—especially by busy rulers like you Romans, to whom physical condition is so important. And again, the man who gives you "Joy" is only beginning auspiciously; it is no more than a prayer; whereas he who bids you "Hail" is doing you a practical service in reminding you of the means to health; his is more than a prayer, it is a precept.

Why, in that book of instructions which you all receive from the Emperor, is not the first recommendation to take care of your health? Quite rightly; that is the condition precedent of efficiency. Moreover, if I know any Latin, you yourselves, in *returning* a salutation, constantly use the equivalent of "Health."

However, all this does not mean that I have deliberately abandoned "Rejoice" and substituted "Hail" for it. I admit that it was quite unintentional; I am not so foolish as to innovate like that, and exchange the regular formulae.

No, I only thank Heaven that my stumble had such very fortunate results, landing me in a better position than I had designed; may it not be that Health itself, or Asclepius, inspired me to give you this promise of health? How else should it have befallen me? In the course of a long life I have never been guilty of such a confusion before.

Or, if I may not have recourse to the supernatural, it is no wonder that my extreme desire to be known to you for good should so confuse me as to work the contrary effect. Possibly, too, one might be robbed of one's presence of mind by the crowd of military persons pushing for precedence, or treating the salutation ceremony in their cavalier fashion.

As to yourself, I feel sure that, however others may have referred it to stupidity, ignorance, or lunacy, you took it as the sign of a modest, simple, unspoiled, unsophisticated soul. Absolute confidence in such matters comes dangerously near audacity and impudence. My first wish would be to make no such blunder; my second that, if I did, the resulting omen should be good.

There is a story told of the first Augustus. He had given a correct legal decision, which acquitted a maligned person of a most serious charge. The latter expressed his gratitude in a loud voice, thus:—"I thank your majesty for this bad and inequitable verdict." Augustus's attendants raged, and were ready to tear the man to pieces. But the Emperor restrained them; "Never mind what he said; it is what he meant that matters." That was Augustus's view. Well, take my meaning, and it was good; or take my word, and it was auspicious.

And now that I have got to this point, I have reason to fear that I may be suspected of having made the slip on purpose, leading up to this apology. O God of health, only grant me that the quality of my

piece may justify the notion that I wanted no more than a peg whereon to hang an essay!

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LONGINUS

THE identity of the author of the famous essay on "The Sublime" is a matter that is in dispute. The usually accepted dates are that he was born somewhere about A.D. 213 and died in 273. Longinus himself is known as the opponent of Neo-Platonism who became instructor to Zenobia, queen of Palmyra. He upheld the need for balance and sanity in criticism and his work was acclaimed as a model by Boileau in the great days of Louis XIV. Professor W. Rhys Roberts has lately expressed his view that we owe the essay to the pen of an unknown Greek man of letters who probably lived at Rome not more than thirty or forty years after the birth of Christ. The essay, a portion of which is here given, was addressed to Terentianus, a Roman of official rank.

OF STYLE AND MORALS

IN CONSIDERATION of your desire for useful information, my dearest Terentianus, I shall not hesitate to add an elucidation of that remaining question, which was recently proposed by a certain philosopher. I wonder, said he, and not I alone, but doubtless many others also, how it happens that in the age we live in, there are many men eminently endowed with talents for persuasion and public speaking, remarkable for shrewdness and readiness, and, above all, expert in the arts which give grace and sweetness to language; but that there are now none at all, or very few, who are distinguished for loftiness and grandeur of style. So great and universal is the dearth of genuine eloquence that prevails in this age. Must we believe at last, that there is truth in that oft-repeated observation, That democracy is the kindly nurse of sublime genius; with whose strength alone truly powerful orators flourish, and disappear as it declines? For liberty, say they, is able to supply nutriment to the lofty conceptions of great minds, and feed their aspirations, and at the same time to foster the flame of mutual emulation, and stimulate ambition for pre-eminence. Nay further, that the mental excellencies of orators are whetted continually by reason of the rewards proposed in free states; that they are made, as it were, to give out fire by collision, and naturally exhibit the light of liberty in their oratorical efforts. But we of the present day, continued he, seem to be trained from our childhood to absolute slavery, having been all but swathed in its customs and institutes, and never allowed to

taste of that most copious fountain of all that is admirable and attractive in eloquence, I mean, liberty; and hence it is that we turn out to be nothing but pompous flatterers. This, he said, was the cause why we see that all other attainments may be found in menials: but never yet a slave become an orator. His spirit being effectually broken, the timorous vassal will still be uppermost; the habit of subjection continually overawes and beats down his genius. For, according to Homer, (*Odys.* i, ver. 322):

> Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
> Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.—*Pope*

As then, said he, (if what I have heard deserves credit,) the cages, in which what are called pigmies are kept, not only prevent the growth of those who are inclined in them, but contract their dimensions by reason of the confinement in which their whole bodies are placed; so slavery of every kind, even the mildest, one might declare to be the cage and common prison of the mind.

Now here I rejoined: it is easy and characteristic of human nature, to find fault with the existing state of things, whatever it be; but I would have you consider whether, in some degree, this corruption of genius is not owing to the profound peace which reigns throughout the world; but much more to the well known war which our lusts are waging within us universally; and, moreover, to those mental foes that have invaded the present age, and waste and ravage all before them. For avarice (that disease of which the whole world is sick beyond a cure), aided by voluptuousness, holds us in abject thraldom; or rather, if I may so express it, drowns us body and mind. For the love of money is the canker of the soul's greatness; and the love of pleasure corrodes every generous sentiment. I have, indeed, thought much upon it, but after all judge it impossible for them that set their hearts upon, or, to speak more truly, that deify unbounded riches, to preserve their souls from the infection of all those vices which are firmly allied to them. For riches that know no bounds and restraint, bring with them profuseness, their close-leagued, and as they call it, dogging attendant; and while wealth unbars the gates of cities, and opens the doors of houses, profuseness gets in at the same time, and takes up a joint residence. And when they have remained awhile in our principles and conduct, they build their nests there (in the language of philosophy,) and speedily proceeding to propagate their species, they hatch arrogance, pride, and luxury; no spurious brood, but their genuine offspring. If these children of wealth be fostered and suffered to reach maturity, they quickly engender in our souls those inexorable tyrants, insolence, injustice, and impudence. When men are thus fallen, what I have mentioned must needs result from their depravity. They can no longer lift up their eyes to anything above themselves, nor feel

any concern for reputation; but the corruption of every principle must needs be gradually accomplished by such a series of vices; and the nobler faculties of the soul decay, and wither, and lose all the fire of emulation, when men neglect the cultivation of their immortal parts, and suffer the mortal and worthless to engross all their care and admiration.

For he that hath received a bribe to pervert judgment, is incapable of forming an unbiassed and sound decision in matters pertaining to equity and honour. For it must needs be, that one corrupted by gifts should be influenced by self-interest in judging of what is just and honourable. And when the whole tenor of our several lives is guided only by corruption, by a desire for the death of others, and schemes to creep into their wills; when we are ready to barter our life for paltry gains, led captive, one and all, by the thirst for lucre, can we expect, in such a general corruption, so contagious a depravity, that there should be found one unbiassed and unperverted judge that can discriminate what is truly great, or will stand the test of time, uninfluenced in his decisions by the lust of gain? But if this is the case, perhaps it is better for such as we are, to be held in subjection, than to be free; for, be sure, if such rapacious desires were suffered to prey upon others without restraint, like wild beasts let out of confinement, they would set the world on fire with the mischiefs they would occasion. Upon the whole, then, I have shown that the bane of true genius in the present day, is that dissolution of morals, which, with few exceptions, prevails universally among men who, in all they do, or undertake, seek only applause and self-gratification, without a thought of that public utility which cannot be too zealously pursued, or too highly valued.

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PLOTINUS

THE last of the Greek philosophers, Plotinus (A.D. 204?-270?) founded the school of Neo-Platonism which has had effects far surpassing the number of its declared adherents. The mysticism of Plotinus has had profound influence upon the Christian Church and, though his school perished, his teaching is still very much alive.

The following passages are taken, by permission, from Mr. Stephen Mackenna's translation of *Plotinus*, published by the Medici Society of London and Boston.

I. THE SAGE

AS FOR violent personal sufferings, he will carry them off as well as he can; if they overpass his endurance they will carry him off. And so in all his pain he asks no pity: there is always the radiance

in the inner soul of the man, untroubled like the light in a lantern when fierce gusts beat about it in a wild turmoil of wind and tempest.

But what if he be put beyond himself? What if pain grow so intense and so torture him that the agony almost kills? Well, when he is put to torture he will plan what is to be done: he retains his freedom of action.

Besides, we must remember that the Sage sees things very differently from the average man; neither ordinary experiences nor pains and sorrows, whether touching himself or others, pierce to the inner hold. To allow them any such passage would be a weakness in our soul.

And it is a sign of weakness, too, if we should think it gain not to hear of miseries, gain to die before they come: this is not concern for others' welfare, but for our own peace of mind. Here we see our imperfections: we must not indulge it, we must put it from us, and cease to tremble over what perhaps may be.

Anyone that says that it is in human nature to grieve over misfortune to our household must learn that this is not so with all, and that, precisely, it is virtue's use to raise the general level of nature towards the better and finer, above the mass of men. And the finer is to set at naught what terrifies the common mind.

We cannot be indolent: this is an arena for the powerful combatant holding his ground against the blows of fortune, and knowing that, sore though they be to some natures, they are little to his, nothing dreadful, nursery terrors.

II. TRUE BEAUTY

BUT there are earlier and loftier beauties than these. In the sense-bound life we are no longer granted to know them, but the Soul, taking no help from the organs, sees and proclaims them. To the vision of these we must mount, leaving sense to its own low place.

As it is not for those to speak of the graceful forms of the material world who have never seen them or known their grace—men born blind, let us suppose—in the same way those must be silent upon the beauty of noble conduct and of learning and of all that order who have never cared for such things, nor may those tell of the splendour of virtue who have never known the face of Justice and of Moral Wisdom beautiful beyond the beauty of Evening and of Dawn.

Such vision is for those only who see with the Soul's sight—and at the vision, they will rejoice, and awe will fall upon them and a trouble deeper than all the rest could ever stir, for now they are moving in the realm of Truth.

This is the spirit that Beauty must ever induce, wonderment and a delicious trouble, longing and love and a trembling that is all delight. For the unseen all this may not be felt as for the seen; and this the Souls feel for it, every Soul in some degree, but those the more deeply

that are the more truly apt to this higher love—just as all take delight in the beauty of the body but all are not stung as sharply, and those only that feel the keener wound are known as Lovers.

These Lovers, then, lovers of the beauty outside of sense, must be made to declare themselves.

What do you feel in presence of the grace you discern in actions, in manners, in sound morality, in all the works and fruits of virtue, in the beauty of Souls? When you see that you yourselves are beautiful within, what do you feel? What is this Dionysiac exultation that thrills through your being, this straining upwards of all your Soul, this longing to break away from the body and live sunken within the veritable self?

These are no other than the emotions of Souls under the spell of love.

But what is it that awakens all this passion? No shape, no colour, no grandeur of mass; all is for a Soul, something whose beauty rests upon no colour, for the moral wisdom the Soul enshrines and all the other hueless splendour of the virtues. It is that you find in yourself, or admire in another, loftiness of spirit; righteousness of life; disciplined purity; courage of the majestic face; gravity; modesty that goes fearless and tranquil and passionless; and, shining down upon all, the light of godlike Intellection.

All these noble qualities are to be reverenced and loved, no doubt, but what entitles them to be called beautiful?

They exist: they manifest themselves to us: anyone that sees them must admit that they have reality of Being; and is not Real Being really beautiful?

ANCIENT ROME

Introductory Note

THE Romans borrowed from the Greeks an intense interest in philosophical speculation which, in course of time, tended to become excessively clever and self-conscious. But Latin literature was never merely imitative. That pride of citizenship which was so strong in the Roman demanded expression and gave all his writing a distinctive note. In the Golden Age, Cicero fashioned the Latin tongue into a magnificent prose-instrument which, for dignity and power, has never been surpassed. Later, in the Silver Age, Seneca followed, bringing the essay-form to perfection. The diatribe or "question-and-answer" type of literature, in which every conceivable form of question upon a given topic was put in order to receive its effective answer, was fashionable at that time and was, indeed, the basis of the intellectual training of the young Roman. It was this which Seneca developed into the essay, making it freer and less artificial. His innovations were not wholly to the liking of purists such as Quintilian, who would admit no model but Cicero, but his influence is undoubted.

A noteworthy feature of the later Latin literature, which was produced when the empire was drawing to its close, is seen in the influence of Eastern thought. Oriental mysticism had brought with it a belief in magic and the newer philosophy was a strange mingling of the stern wisdom of the old thinkers with all manner of superstitious marvels. This is clearly exemplified in the work of Apuleius.

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CICERO

EVEN those who were most active in belittling him were forced to admit Cicero's greatness as an orator. He also attained pre-eminence as a polished letter-writer. "All the great letter-writers of more modern ages," says Mackail, "have more or less, consciously or unconsciously, followed the Ciceronian model. England of the eighteenth century was particularly rich in them; but Horace Walpole, Cowper, Gray himself, would willingly have acknowledged Cicero as their master." It is noteworthy that when Cicero (106-43 B.C.) delivered his first speeches Latin prose was as yet unformed. He it was who, by painstaking effort, raised it from a mere dialect to the proud position which it was afterward to occupy. The essays "On Friendship" and "Old Age" found a prominent place on Dante's bookshelf and have

been justly held in high esteem ever since. It is on them and on the letters that the fame of Cicero now rests securely rather than on the speeches which won for him the regard of his contemporaries.

The following passage is taken from Thomas Newton's translation of *De Senectute*. The archaic flavour of his rendering, seeming to have a certain appropriateness to the subject, has been preserved.

OF DEATH AND OLD AGE

FOR all things which come by course of nature are to be reckoned and accompted among good things; and what is so much according to natural course as for an old aged man to die? Which doth happen to young men, as it were, maugre nature's good-will. Therefore, young men, in mine opinion, seem so to die as when a raging and violent flame of fire is quenched, with a great quantity or effusion of water; but old men die as it were fire, which, lacking wood and combustible matter to nourish it, goeth out quietly and is quenched, as though it were of his own accord, not forcibly. And as apples which are green and unripe are not plucked from the tree but by a certain violent plucking, but if they be ripe and mellow, they fall voluntarily down from the tree; so likewise, young men depart out of their life by violent force and painful struggling, but old men die by a certain ripeness and maturity. And as often as I think thereon, I am rapt with such joy and comfort, that the nearer I draw and approach to death, the sooner, methink, I see the dry land, and (as it were, after a long navigation and seafaring voyage) shall at length arrive at the quiet haven and port of all rest and security. All other ages have a certain number of years appointed, how long every one continueth, but unto old age there are no determinate and certain times limited and prefixed, and therefore thou livest therein well and laudably, as long as thou canst execute thy office, discharge thy duty, and defend thine authority, and yet, nevertheless, to contemn death. And for this cause, it happeneth that old age is endued with greater courage and animosity than adolescency and youth is. And this is the cause, that when the tyrant Peisistratus demanded of Solon how he durst be so bold, or wherein he reposed his trust, so wilfully and boldly to gainsay and disobey his proceedings: Solon answered him that he trusted to his old age, and that was it that made him full of courage, and gave him boldness to resist him; forasmuch as he with lawless force and monstrous tyranny had attempted to oppress the commonwealth, miserably frushed through his unbridled and tyrannical invasions. But the best end of life is this: when nature, which compacted and framed the body, doth likewise dissolve and bring to death the same, being in good and perfect remembrance, the use of the wits and senses in no part appaired nor diminished. For

even as the shipwright which made the ship knoweth best how to undo and pull the same asunder again, and as none hath better skill to unjoint or take down a house than the carpenter that made it; even so nature, which fashioned the feature of the body and set the same in a most decent symmetry, doth best dissolve and end it by natural death. For every conglutination when it is fresh and newly glued together, will not easily be pulled asunder but by violent haling and forcible rupture, but when it is inveterate and old, it may easily be divelled and severed. Thus, you see that the small remnant and time of our race and life which is behind unrun, is neither affectuously to be desired, nor without cause to be left and forsaken. And the famous philosopher, Pythagoras, giveth us a sore charge, that we should not depart out of the garrison and ward-house of this life unless we have commission and commandment from our general-captain which is God. Solon his wise saying is very notable and praiseworthy, for he would not that his death should be unbewailed and unlamented of his friends. His meaning (I think) was because he would not seem to be forgotten, but rather entirely to be beloved and remembered of his friends, which thing their dolorous plaints and inward griefs at his last end and funeral obsequies should bewray and evidently witness. But yet Ennius his opinion in like case may, in my judgment, be better allowed, for he would not have his friends to moan and lament for him after his death, and these are his words:

> Surcease from tears, when I am dead,
> And let not them for me be shed,
> When death shall with his deadly dart
> My corpse and soul asunder part!
> And why? the clanging trump of fame
> Shall ever sound abroad my name.

This noble poet would not have the death of them to be lamented and with feminine blubbering and screeches to be bewailed, whose praise and virtue is immortalized and enrolled in the book of fame, and their worthy deeds registered in the scroll of eternity. As touching the bitter pangs and extreme agonies which they suffer that lie in dying (if there may any such be), truly it continueth but for a small while, specially in an old man; and after death, the sense is either such as is blessed and optable, or else it is none at all. But all young men ought to imprint this in their minds, and meditate the same, that they be not in any servile and dastardly fear of death, but to stand at defiance and contemn it. For whatsoever enureth not himself with this meditation cannot have a quiet mind. We are most sure that we must die, and we know not whether our hour will come even that same very day. Therefore he that every hour standeth in fear of death, how can his mind be in any rest or tranquillity. Whereof there needeth no very

long disputation to be had, sith I do well remember not only Lucius Brutus, who in the quarrel of his country, which was despoiled and with tyranny oppressed, most manfully was slain; the two Decii, who, being armed at all pieces and mounted on horseback, galloped and gave themselves willingly to death for their country's sake; Marcus Regulus, who (rather than he would forswear himself and break promise with his most deadly and bloody enemies) went willingly to his most certain torment and punishment (where he well knew that he should suffer death after a strange and terrible manner), and would not in any wise by his kinsfolks and friends be altered and removed from his determination; the two Scipios, who with their own bodies chose rather to stop the passage of the fresh succours (which, under the conduct of Hasdrubal, came to aid Hannibal and the proud Carthaginians, for infesting and afflicting Italy with sword, famine, and fire), than to suffer and permit them to set any foot within the territories and precincts of the Roman dition; your grandfather, Lucius Paulus, who, through the temerity and folly of his fellow-in-office, Terentius Varro, was in that ignominious overthrow and shameful discomfiture in the conflict and battle of Cannae, slain and brought to confusion; and Marcus Marcellus, whose valiance and magnanimity was so great and so well tried, that his and our cruel enemy, Hannibal, when he had slain him in the field, caused his dead corse with all funeral pomp and solemnity of sepulture to be interred; but also how our legions and armies courageously adventured to take such voyages and venturous expeditions into such dangerous places, from whence they looked [not] to return alive again; whereof I have written in my book of *Originals*. Shall, therefore, old men, which have great knowledge and experience, fear that which young striplings, and the same not only unskilful, but also blunt and rustical, do contemn and care not for? But, methinks satiety of all things causeth satiety of life. There are some fantastical and childish plays whereat young children in their childhood delight to play; shall, therefore, young men and tall fellows addict themselves to the same semblably? There are some exercises and affections wherein youthly years do enure themselves: shall the ripe and constant age (which is called the middle age of man) look to play at the same? And of this middle age there are some studies, wills, and appetites which old age careth not for. And there be some studies and exercises belonging and appropriate to old age. And therefore as the pleasure and delight of the studies and exercises in fresher and lustier ages doth in time wear away and come to an end, so doth the studies of old age in continuance and tract of time also die and vanish. And when this pleasure and delightful contentation begin in old men once to decrease, then doth satiety of life bring to them a convenable and mature time to die. For verily I cannot see why I should not be bold to utter and declare to you twain the very entire cogitations of my heart, and the opinion

which I have of death, and the rather because I suppose that I do better know and see it, as one that now am near the pit's brink, having one of my feet already in the grave. And I am in this belief (O Publius Scipio and Caius Lælius) that your noble fathers, men for their virtuous manners and worthy demerit immortalized, who also were my most dear and loving friends, do yet live, yea, and such a life as is worthy only to be called a life, which is immortal and not transitory. For as long as we dwell and be included within this lumpish body, proportioned with joints, sinews, flesh, bone, and other parts, which may be called the prison or case of our soul, we are driven and by a necessity enforced to do some actions (will we or nill we) as to sleep, eat, drink, etc., and to do some cumbersome works which are inevitable. But the mind or soul, which is divine and celestial, sent down from God out of heaven and infused into man, is depressed and as it were forcibly dejected or thrust down to the earth, being a place quite contrary to divine nature and eternity, because it is mortal and visible, whereas the other is immortal and invisible. But I do think that the immortal Gods inspired minds into human bodies because there should be some to inhabit the earth, who, beholding and considering the orders of the celestial bodies, and weighing how duly they observe their courses and motions, might imitate and follow the same right order in the trades of their life and constancy. And not only reason and frequent disputation moveth me thus to believe, but also the profound doctrine and authorities of most noble and approved philosophers. For I have been in place where I heard that Pythagoras and his disciples which inhabited within our country, and were in manner free denizens within our precinct and dominion (for they were once named Italian Philosophers) affirmed and said that they were never otherwise persuaded nor never held opinion to the contrary, but that our minds were formed and derived from the universal divinity of God. Furthermore, it was told me what Socrates disputed and spake concerning the immortality of the soul, and what he openly said, being an ancient philosopher, and one whom Apollo his oracle judged the wisest man in the whole world, even the last day of his life, a little before his death. What needeth many words? I am so firmly persuaded, and on this point so wholly resolved, seeing there is so great celerity of the mind, so good remembrance of things past, and so great forecast and prudence in things to come, so many arts, so many sciences, so many inventions and ingenious devices, that the nature which understandeth and containeth the knowledge of all these things is not mortal. And sith the mind is ever moved, having no beginning of motion because it moveth itself, and shall never have any end of motion, because it is eternal, and shall never leave itself: and sith the nature of the mind is simple, having nothing mixed to it which is unlike and discrepant to it, I thereby know that it is indivisible, whereupon it confrequently fol-

loweth that forasmuch as it is indivisible it can never die and perish utterly.

And these reasons following make much for the probation thereof, that men know many things before they be born; that children (notwithstanding the abstruse and painful difficulty of arts) do so quickly learn and, as who would say, snatchingly conceive innumerable things, that they seem not then at the first to learn them, but rather repeat and call them again to memory. These be for the most part the arguments and reasons which the divine philosopher Plato allegeth and bringeth for his proof of the immortality of the souls. Also Xenophon writeth that King Cyrus, the elder, lying on his death-bed, spake these words following to his children:

"I would not (my children) that you should think, when I am departed out of this life and gone from you, that I shall be nowhere or brought to nothing. For you never saw with your bodily eyes my mind, during all this while that I lived here with you: but as long as I dwelled in this body you well perceived and knew by my valiant exploits and acts, that I had a mind. Therefore think you not otherwise but that I am the very same still, and my said mind shall still remain as before, although you see it not visibly. For neither should the noble memorial and honourable monuments of princes and worthy personages remain after their death, if in their lifetime, by the policy and prowess of their minds, they did not achieve some worthy enterprises, whereby their fame and honour might be remembered and magnified of their posterity. Truly it would never sink in my brain that the minds or souls did live only while they remained in mortal bodies, and being departed out of them utterly to die, that no more of them should remain. Nor that the soul and mind of sots and fools is doltish and blockish when it is set at liberty and departed out of their foolish bodies; but when it is purified from the filthy admixtion and drossy impurity of the same body, and fined from imperfection and beginning to be sound, perfect, and clear, then is it wise, sapient, and incorrupt.

"And man's nature being by death dissolved, it is apparent and well enough to all men known to what place all the other parts do go, for they do all return to that matter whereof they had their first and original beginning; but the mind only is never with any bodily eyes seen nor perceived, neither when it is in the body, nor when it goeth and departeth out of the body.

"Now, you see that nothing is so like to death as sleep. And yet the minds of them that are asleep do greatly declare their divinity; for when they be at quietness and rest and with no careful cogitations overwhelmed, they do foresee many things to come, whereby it may plainly be perceived how and in what happy state they shall be, when they be dismissed and discharged out of their dungeon or gaol of their

mortal bodies. If, therefore, these things be true, then reverence and honour me as a god for the participation of the divine nature which is in my mind. But if the soul do die together with the body (as some ass-headed philosophers, flattering themselves in their bestial living and wallowing like swine in the filthy puddle of their epicurial sensuality, have affirmed) yet you, ever dreading the gods, being the protectors, disposers and governors of all the beautiful ornament and furniture of this wide world, shall not miss, but godly and inviolably solemnize and keep the memorial of me."

These advertisements and exhortations Cyrus gave to his sons, lying on his deathbed. Now let us (if you think good) take a survey of our own selves, and see whether the same opinion and belief be not to be found in us and in other of our countrymen. I will be plain with thee, Scipio: no man in the world shall ever be able to persuade me that either thy father, Paulus Æmilius, or thy two grandfathers, Paulus and Africanus, or Publius Scipio, the brother of Africanus, or Caius Scipio, his uncle, or many more famous and worthy men which here need not to be rehearsed, would ever have attempted such perilous adventures (only to leave a noble and worthy memorial of their fame and valiance to their sequel whom they wished should take example of their fortitude and tread in the footsteps of their laudable virtues, whereby they might achieve like success in their glorious affairs, and not fear to die in the quarrel of their country when foreign hostility invadeth it), if with the quick understanding of their minds they had not well seen and considered that their posterity appertained and belonged to them. Do you think that I (for I may, I trust, somewhat vaunt and boast of myself, as old men are wont to do) would ever have undertaken so many labours and painful travails night and day, both in the time of peace and also of war, if I had had this opinion fixed and rooted in my mind, that my glory and fame should extend no further than my natural life, and that when the one ceased the other should die also? For if that were so, were it not (I pray you) a great deal better to lead a quiet life, sequestered and exempt from all hurly-burly and toiling business, and never to intermeddle with contentious matters and the laborious affairs of the weal public? But the mind of noble personages (I know not how it chanceth) erecting itself and taking courage, had ever such a careful respect to their succession, as though when they were departed out of this life, they should then at length, and never till then, live and flourish, their incomparable gifts triumphing over cankered oblivion and their virtuous lives over mortal death. For if it were not so that the souls should be immortal, the mind of every good and virtuous man would not so earnestly with all his study and devoir seek to attain and aspire to immortal glory and perpetual renown.

Furthermore, every good and wise man dieth willingly, and rejoiceth therein exceedingly, taking death to be a joyful messenger to summon

him to endless felicity: on the other side, every foolish man dieth unwillingly. Do you not think that the mind which seeth better and further off, doth well perceive and know that he goeth to a far better state than in this world is to be found? Again, the mind of the foolish sort, whose sight is dimmer and duller, doth not see nor understand so much. But, verily, I have a great desire to see and behold your fathers, whom I entirely loved, and had for their singular virtues in great admiration. And not them only am I so earnestly affected to see, with whom I was very familiarly acquainted, but others also of whom I have both heard, read, and also written. And when I am in my journey to them (which I so greatly desire) there should no man bring me back again, though he would and also could; neither to make me to retire to the place from whence I came, like to a ball which tennis players toss and strike to their counter players, and they again to the other side, yea, though he would undertake to renew my youth again, as we read that Pelias was in his old age. I will say more, if God would grant me now in this age to return again to my infancy and to be as young as a child that lieth crying in his cradle, I would refuse and forsake the offer with all my might; neither would I when I have already in a manner run the whole race and won the goal, be again revoked from the end marks to the lists, or place where I took my course at the first setting out. For who would be contented, when he hath gotten the best game, to be forced to run again for the same? What pleasure and commodity hath life? yea, rather, what pain, toil, and labour hath it not? But let us admit that it had great commodity, yet, undoubtedly, it hath either an end or else satiety. For I mean not to lament and deplore the lack of the pleasant and fresh time of my youth, as diverse and the same right well-learned men have done; neither do I repent that I have lived, because I have so lived and led my life that I may judge of myself that I was not born in vain, but rather for great utility and special consideration. And I depart out of this life as out of an inn, and not out of a dwelling-house. For nature hath given to us a lodging to remain and sojourn in for a time, and not to dwell in continually. O lucky and blessed day wherein I shall take my journey to appear before the blissful troop and convocation of happy minds, and leave this troublesome world, being the vale of all misery and the filthy sink of all mischief. For I shall not only go to those worthy men (of whom I spake a little before), but also to my dear son Cato, who was a man of such sanctity and goodness as none more, of such sincere and unstained honesty as none better, whose body was with funeral rites put into the fire and burned to ashes by me his father, whereas it had been more meet and more agreeable to the course of nature that my body should have been with semblable obsequies and ceremonies first burnt and intumulate by him. But his mind and soul not utterly forsaking me, but ever looking and expecting my coming, is gone before

into those places of joy whither he perceived that I myself (ere it be long) must also come. Which brunt of calamity and heavy chance of sorrow I seemed patiently to sustain, not because I did take the matter so patiently indeed; but I comforted myself thinking and deeming that we should not be long asunder, but after a time again to have a joyful meeting. These are the causes and the very reasons, Scipio (because you and Lælius said you much marvelled thereat) which make my old age to me easy and tolerable, and not only without all grievance and disturbation, but also replenished with all expedient pleasures. And if I do err because I think that the souls of men be immortal, verily I am well contented in the same error still to continue, and as long as I live I will never renounce nor recant the same, wherein I take such singular pleasure and comfort; and if it were not so, that after death I should feel nothing nor have no sense at all (as certain pettifoggers and bastard philosophers hold opinion) I fear not a whit least these lip-labourers and idiotical philosophers, when they themselves be dead, should scoff and make a mocking-stock at this mine assertion and belief, because they themselves shall also be without sense, and like to brute beasts. But admit that after death we should not be immortal, yet it is both convenient and also optable for a man, when he hath honestly played his part in the pageant of this life, to die and pay his debt to nature. For nature as she hath an end of all other things, so also of living. And old age is, as it were, the peroration or final end of a man's time in this world, much like to the epilogue or catastrophe of an interlude, the wearisome repetition or defatigation whereof we ought to avoid and eschew, and especially when we are fully cloyed with satiety. Thus much at your request I had to say concerning old age, unto the which God grant you may arrive, that the things which you have heard of me by mouth, you may prove true by certain trial and actual experiment.

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SENECA

THE personality of the Stoic philosopher (3 B.C.—A.D. 65) who became Nero's prime minister is extremely elusive. We know that he was born in Spain, that he held various administrative posts under successive emperors, and that he became tutor to the twelve-year-old Nero. Finally, in conjunction with his friend Burrus, he administered the state, becoming, so the elder Pliny tells us, "the leader in letters and the leader in government." The endeavour to combine primacy in literature with pre-eminence in affairs has seldom been successful. Probably Seneca has combined the two more dexterously on the whole than any other statesman of whom we have any record. It is at any rate unfair to tax him with a failure that should be laid at the door of

the tyrant whom he served. What is of particular moment to us is the fact that Seneca, in casting about for a suitable medium for his teaching, chose the essay—a novel type to the Roman—and brought it to perfection.

The following passage is taken from Aubrey Stewart's translation of "On Benefits."

INGRATITUDE

IF A true picture of our life were to rise before your mental vision, you would, I think, behold a scene like that of a town just taken by storm, where decency and righteousness were no longer regarded, and no advice is heard but that of force, as if universal confusion were the word of command. Neither fire nor sword are spared; crime is unpunished by the laws; even religion, which saves the lives of suppliants in the very midst of armed enemies, does not check those who are rushing to secure plunder. Some men rob private houses, some public buildings; all places, sacred or profane, are alike stripped; some burst their way in, others climb over; some open a wider path for themselves by overthrowing the walls that keep them out, and make their way to their booty over ruins; some ravage without murdering, others brandish spoils dripping with their owner's blood; every one carries off his neighbours' goods. In this greedy struggle of the human race surely you forget the common lot of all mankind, if you seek among these robbers for one who will return what he has got. If you are indignant at men being ungrateful, you ought also to be indignant at their being luxurious, avaricious, and lustful; you might as well be indignant with sick men for being ugly, or with old men for being pale. It is, indeed, a serious vice, it is not to be borne, and sets men at variance with one another; nay, it rends and destroys that union by which alone our human weakness can be supported; yet it is so absolutely universal, that even those who complain of it most are not themselves free from it.

Consider within yourself, whether you have always shown gratitude to those to whom you owe it, whether no one's kindness has ever been wasted upon you, whether you constantly bear in mind all the benefits which you have received. You will find that those which you received as a boy were forgotten before you became a man; that those bestowed upon you as a young man slipped from your memory when you became an old one. Some we have lost, some we have thrown away, some have by degrees passed out of our sight, to some we have wilfully shut our eyes. If I am to make excuses for your weakness, I must say in the first place that human memory is a frail vessel, and is not large enough to contain the mass of things placed in it; the more it receives,

the more it must necessarily lose; the oldest things in it give way to the newest. Thus it comes to pass that your nurse has hardly any influence with you, because the lapse of time has set the kindness which you received from her at so great a distance; thus it is that you no longer look upon your teacher with respect; and that now when you are busy about your candidature for the consulate or the priesthood, you forget those who supported you in your election to the quaestorship. If you carefully examine yourself, perhaps you will find the vice of which you complain in your own bosom; you are wrong in being angry with a universal failing, and foolish also, for it is your own as well; you must pardon others, that you may yourself be acquitted. You will make your friend a better man by bearing with him, you will in all cases make him a worse one by reproaching him. You can have no reason for rendering him shameless; let him preserve any remnants of modesty which he may have. Too loud reproaches have often dispelled a modesty which might have borne good fruit. No man fears to be that which all men see that he is; when his fault is made public, he loses his sense of shame.

You say, "I have lost the benefit which I bestowed." Yet do we say that we have lost what we consecrate to heaven, and a benefit well bestowed, even though we get an ill return for it, is to be reckoned among things consecrated. Our friend is not such a man as we hoped he was; still, let us, unlike him, remain the same as we were. The loss did not take place when he proved himself so; his ingratitude cannot be made public without reflecting some shame upon us, since to complain of the loss of a benefit is a sign that it was not well bestowed. As far as we are able we ought to plead with ourselves on his behalf: "Perhaps he was not able to return it, perhaps he did not know of it, perhaps he will still do so." A wise and forbearing creditor prevents the loss of some debts by encouraging his debtor and giving him time. We ought to do the same, we ought to deal tenderly with a weakly sense of honour.

"I have lost," say you, "the benefit which I bestowed." You are a fool, and do not understand when your loss took place; you have indeed lost it, but you did so when you gave it, the fact has only now come to light. Even in the case of those benefits which appear to be lost, gentleness will do much good; the wounds of the mind ought to be handled as tenderly as those of the body. The string, which might be disentangled by patience, is often broken by a rough pull. What is the use of abuse, or of complaints? why do you overwhelm him with reproaches? why do you set him free from his obligations? even if he be ungrateful he owes you nothing after this. What sense is there in exasperating a man on whom you have conferred great favours, so as out of a doubtful friend to make a certain enemy, and one, too, who will seek to support his own cause by defaming you, or to make men

say, "I do not know what the reason is that he cannot endure a man to whom he owes so much; there must be something in the background?" Any man can asperse, even if he does not permanently stain the reputation of his betters by complaining of them; nor will anyone be satisfied with imputing small crimes to them, when it is only by the enormity of his falsehood that he can hope to be believed.

What a much better way is that by which the semblance of friendship, and, indeed, if the other regains to his right mind, friendship itself is preserved! Bad men are overcome by unwearying goodness, nor does anyone receive kindness in so harsh and hostile a spirit as not to love good men even while he does them wrong, when they lay him under the additional obligation of requiring no return for their kindness. Reflect, then, upon this: you say, "My kindness has met with no return, what am I to do? I ought to imitate the gods, those noblest disposers of all events, who begin to bestow their benefits on those who know them not, and persist in bestowing them on those who are ungrateful for them. Some reproach them with neglect of us, some with injustice towards us; others place them outside of their own world, in sloth and indifference, without light, and without any functions; others declare that the sun itself, to whom we owe the division of our times of labour and of rest, by whose means we are saved from being plunged in the darkness of eternal night; who by his circuit orders the seasons of the year, gives strength to our bodies, brings forth our crops and ripens our fruits, is merely a mass of stone, or a fortuitous collection of fiery particles, or anything rather than a god. Yet, nevertheless, like the kindest of parents, who only smile at the spiteful words of their children, the gods do not cease to heap benefits upon those who doubt from what source their benefits are derived, but continue impartially distributing their bounty among all the peoples and nations of the earth. Possessing only the power of doing good, they moisten the land with seasonable showers, they put the seas in movement by the winds, they mark time by the course of the constellations, they temper the extremes of heat and cold, of summer and winter, by breathing a milder air upon us; and they graciously and serenely bear with the faults of our erring spirits! Let us follow their example; let us give, even if much be given to no purpose, let us, in spite of this, give to others; nay, even to those upon whom our bounty has been wasted. No one is prevented by the fall of a house from building another; when one home has been destroyed by fire, we lay the foundations of another before the site has had time to cool; we rebuild ruined cities more than once upon the same spots, so untiring are our hopes of success. Men would undertake no works either on land or sea if they were not willing to try again what they have failed in once.

"Suppose a man is ungrateful, he does not injure me, but himself;

I had the enjoyment of my benefit when I bestowed it upon him. Because he is ungrateful, I shall not be slower to give but more careful; what I have lost with him, I shall receive back from others. But I will bestow a second benefit upon this man himself, and will overcome him even as a good husbandman overcomes the sterility of the soil by care and culture; if I do not do so my benefit is lost to me, and he is lost to mankind. It is no proof of a great mind to give and to throw away one's bounty; the true test of a great mind is to throw away one's bounty and still to give."

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QUINTILIAN

QUINTILIAN (A.D. 35?-95) was about the year 72 made head of the school of oratory in Rome by the emperor Vespasian. It is noteworthy that he was the first teacher to receive remuneration from the imperial exchequer for his service. He exerted himself to restore a purer taste in letters, constantly exhorting his pupils to follow the older models, among whom he held Cicero in high esteem. The most famous of his pupils was Pliny the Younger. Like Seneca, whose prose-style he attacked, Quintilian was of Spanish origin.

The following passage is taken from *De Institutione Oratoria.*

OF JOCULARITY

I AM now to treat of the manner of dissipating melancholy impressions, of unbending the mind from too intense application, of renewing its powers and recruiting its strength, after being surfeited and fatigued.

Now, we may be sensible, from the examples of the two great fathers of Greek and Roman eloquence, how difficult a matter this is, for it is generally thought that Demosthenes had no talents, and Cicero no bounds, in raising laughter. The truth is Demosthenes was not at all averse from attempting it, as appears by the instances of that kind which he left behind him; which, though very few, are far from being answerable to his other excellences. Few, however, as they are, they show that he liked jocularity, but that he had not the art of hitting it off. But as to our countryman Cicero, he was thought to affect it too much, for it not only entered into his common discourse, but into his most solemn pleadings. For my part, call it want of judgment or prepossession in favour of the most eloquent of mankind, I think Cicero had a wonderful share of delicate wit. No man ever said so many good things as he did in ordinary conversation, in debat-

ing, and in examining of witnesses; and he artfully throws into the mouths of others all his insipid jokes concerning Verres, and brings them as so many evidences of the notoriety of the charges against him; thereby intimating that the more vulgar they were, it was the more probable they were the language of the public, and not invented to serve the purposes of the orator. I wish, however, that his freedman Tyro, or whoever he was who collected the three books of his jokes, had been a little more sparing in publishing the good things he said; and that in choosing them he had been as judicious as in compiling them he was industrious. The compiler then had been less liable to criticism; and yet the book, even as it has come to our hands, discovers the characteristics of Cicero's genius; for, however you may retrench from it, you can add nothing to it.

Several things concur to render this manner extremely difficult. In the first place, all ridicule has something in it that is buffoonish; that is, somewhat that is low, and oftentimes purposely rendered mean. In the next place, it is never attended with dignity, and people are apt to construe it in different senses; because it is not judged by any criterion of reason, but by a certain unaccountable impression which it makes upon the hearer. I call it unaccountable, because many have endeavoured to account for it, but, I think, without success. Here it is that a laugh may arise, not only from an action or a saying, but even the very motion of the body may raise it; add to this, that there are many different motives for laughter. For we laugh not only at actions and sayings that are witty and pleasant, but such as are stupid, passionate, and cowardly. It is, therefore, of a motley composition; for very often we laugh *with* a man as well as laugh *at* him. For, as Cicero observes, "the province of ridiculousness consists in a certain meanness and deformity." The manner that points them out is termed wit or urbanity. If while we are pointing them out we make ourselves ridiculous, it is termed folly. Even the slightest matter, when it comes from a buffoon, an actor—nay, a dunce, may, notwithstanding, carry with it an effect that I may call irresistible, and such as it is impossible for us to guard against. The pleasure it gives us bursts from us even against our will, and appears not only in the expression of our looks and our voices, but is powerful enough even to shake the whole frame of our body. Very often, as I have already observed, one touch of the ridiculous may give a turn to the most serious affairs. We have an instance of this in some young Tarentines, who, having at an entertainment made very free with the character of King Pyrrhus, were next morning examined before him upon what they had said, which, though they durst not defend and could not deny, yet they escaped by a well-turned joke: "Sire," says one of them, "if our liquor had not failed us we would have murdered you." This turn of wit at once cancelled all the guilt they were charged with.

Yet this knack, or whatever the reader pleases to call it, of joking, I will not venture to pronounce to be void of all art, for it admits of certain rules, which Greek and Roman writers have reduced into a system; I, however, affirm that its success is chiefly owing to nature and the occasion. Now, nature does not consist in the acuteness and skill which some possess above others in the inventive part (for that may be improved by art); but some people's manner and face are so well fitted for this purpose, that, were others to say the same thing, it would lose a great part of its gracefulness. With regard to the occasion and the subject, they are so very serviceable in matters of wit, that dunces and clowns have been known to make excellent repartees; and, indeed, everything has a better grace that comes by way of attack. What adds to the difficulty is, that no rules can be laid down for the practice of this thing, and no masters can teach it. We know a great many who say smart things at entertainments, or in common conversation; and, indeed, they cannot avoid it, for they are hourly attempting it. But the wit that is required in an orator is seldom to be met with; it forms no part of his art, but arises from the habits of life. I know no objection, however, against prescribing exercises of this kind, to accustom young men to compositions of a brisk lively turn of wit: nay, the sayings which we call "good things," and which are so common on merry-making and festival days, may be of very great service to the practice at the bar, could they be brought to answer any purpose of utility, or could they be brought in aid of any serious subject. At present, however, they serve no purpose but that of useless diversion to younger persons. . . .

We may either act or speak ridicule. Sometimes a grave way of doing an arch thing occasions great ridicule. Thus, when the consul Isauricus had broken the curule chair belonging to the praetor Marcus Cœlius, the latter erected another chair, slung upon leathern straps, because it was notorious that the consul, on a time, had been strapped by his father. Sometimes ridicule attacks objects that are past all sense of shame; for instance, the adventure of the casket, mentioned by Cicero in his pleading for Cœlius. But that was so scandalous a thing that no one in his senses could enlarge upon it. We may make the same observation when there is anything droll in the look or the manner; for they may be rendered extremely diverting, but never so much as when they appear to be very serious. For nothing is more stupid than to see a man always upon the titter, and, as it were, beating up for a laugh. But, though a grave, serious look and manner add greatly to ridicule, and indeed are sometimes ridicule itself, by the person remaining quite serious, yet still it may be assisted by the looks and the powers of the face, and a certain pleasing adjustment of one's whole gesture: but always remember never to overdo.

As to the ridicule that consists in words, its character is either that of wantonness and jollity, as we generally saw in Galba; or cutting, such as the late Junius Bassus possessed; or blunt and rough, like the manner of Cassius Severus; or winning and delicate, like that of Domitius Afer. The place where we employ those different manners is of great importance, for at entertainments and in common discourses the vulgar are wanton, but all mankind may be cheerful. Meanwhile, let all malice be removed, and let us never adopt that maxim, "Rather to lose our friend than our jest." With regard to our practice at the bar, if I were to employ any of the manners I have mentioned, it should be that of the gentle, delicate kind. Though at the same time we are allowed to employ the most reproachful and cutting expressions against our adversaries; but that is in the case of capital impeachments, when justice is demanded upon an offender. But even in that case, we think it inhuman to insult the misery or the fallen state of another, for such are generally less to blame than they are represented, and insults may recoil upon the head of the person who employs them.

We are in the first place, therefore, to consider who the person is that speaks, what is the cause, who is the judge, who is the party, and what are the expressions. An orator ought by all means to avoid every distortion of look and gesture employed by comedians to raise a laugh. All farcical theatrical pertness is likewise utterly inconsistent with the character of an orator; and he ought to be so far from expressing, that he ought not to imitate anything that is offensive to modesty. Nay, though he should have an opportunity to expose it, it may be sometimes more proper to pass it over.

Further, though I think the manner of an orator ought at all times to be elegant and genteel, yet he should by no means affect being thought a wit. He should not, therefore, be always witty when he can; and he ought sometimes to sacrifice his jest to his character. What indignation does it give us in a trial upon atrocious crimes, to hear a pleader breaking his jokes, or an advocate merry, while he is speaking in defence of the miserable!

Besides, we are to reflect that some judges are of so serious a cast as not to endure anything that may raise a laugh. Sometimes it happens that the reproach we aim at our opponent hits the judge himself, or suits our own client. And some are so foolish that they cannot refrain from expressions that recoil upon themselves. This was the case with Longus Sulpicius, who, being himself a very ugly fellow, and pleading a cause that affected the liberty of another person, said, "Nature had not given that man the face of a free man." "Then," replies Domitius Afer to him, "you are in your soul and conscience of opinion that every man who has an ugly face ought to be a slave."

An orator likewise is to avoid everything that is ill-mannered, or haughty, offensive in the place, or unseasonable upon the occasion. He is likewise to say nothing that seems premeditated and studied before he came into court. Now, as I have already said, it is barbarous to joke upon the miseries of another; while some are so venerable, so amiable in their universal character, that a pleader only hurts himself by attacking them. . . .

One maxim is of use, not only to the purposes of an orator, but to the purposes of life; which is, never to attack a man whom it is dangerous to provoke, lest you be brought to maintain some disagreeable enmities, or to make some scandalous submissions. It is likewise highly improper to throw out any invectives that numbers of people may take to themselves; or to arraign, by the lump, nations, degrees, and ranks of mankind, or those pursuits which are common to many. A man of sense and good breeding will say nothing that can hurt his own character or probity. A laugh is too dearly bought when purchased at the expense of virtue.

It is, however, extremely difficult to point out all the different manners of raising a laugh, and the occasions that furnish it. Nay, it is next to impossible to trace all the different sources of ridicule. In general, however, a laugh may be raised either from the personal appearance of an opponent, or from his understanding, as it appears by his words or actions, or from exterior circumstances. These, I say, are the three sources of all vilifying, which, if urged with acrimony, become serious; if with pleasantry, ridiculous. Now, all the ridicule I have mentioned arises either from exposition, narrative, or characterizing.

Sometimes, but seldom, it happens that an object of ridicule actually presents itself upon the spot. This happened to Caius Julius, who told Helmius Mancia, who was deafening the whole court with his bawling, that he would show him what he resembled. The other challenging him to make good his promise Julius pointed with his finger to the distorted figure of a Gaul, painted upon the shield of Marius, which was set up as a sign to one of the booths that stood round the forum, and in fact was very like Mancia. The narrative of imaginary circumstances may be managed with the greatest delicacy and oratorical art; witness Cicero's narrative concerning Cepasius and Fabricius, in his pleading for Cluentius; and the manner in which Marcus Cœlius represents the race run between Caius Lælius and his colleague, which should get first to his province. But all such recitals require every elegant, every genteel touch the orator can give them; and the whole must be brought up with the most delicate humour. How much ridicule does Cicero apply to the description of the retreat of Fabricius! "Thus he thought himself doing mighty

matters, while he was, from his magazines of eloquence, playing off those most pathetic expressions: 'Look back upon the mutability of fortune; look back to the variety and alterations to which human life is subject; look back upon the old age of Fabricius.' Now, when he came to the last 'look back,' which he had so often repeated to embellish his discourse, he 'looked back' himself; but by this time Fabricius had stolen out of court." And what follows is in the same strain; for the passage is well known. All this high finishing did not contain a word that was fact, more than that Fabricius had left the court.

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TACITUS

When the historian, who combined a rare descriptive power with a marvellously condensed style, turned aside to pay a filial tribute to his father-in-law, Agricola, he composed a panegyric rather than a biography. His aim was to give a true impression and an insight into character rather than to present, in chronological sequence, the details of Agricola's life. This constitutes our excuse for including the following affecting account—"the high-water mark even of Latin prose" [1] —among the essays. Further justification, if it be necessary, may be found in the fact that the passage reveals to us quite as much of the writer's personality as of the subject's. Tacitus was born in A.D. 55 and died in 120.

The following passage is taken from Thomas Gordon's translation of *The Life of Agricola.*

A FILIAL TRIBUTE

AGRICOLA was born on the 13th of June, during the third Consulship of the Emperor Caligula. He died on the 24th of August, during the Consulship of Collega and Priscus, in the fifty-sixth year of his age. If posterity be desirous to know his make and stature; in his person he was rather genteel and regular than tall. In his aspect there was nothing terrible. His looks were extremely graceful and pleasing. A good man you would have readily believed him, and been glad to have found that he was a great man. Nay, though he was snatched away whilst his age was yet in full vigour, if however his life be measured by his glory, he attained to a mighty length of days. For, every true felicity and acquisition, namely, all such as arise from virtue, he had already enjoyed to the full. As he had been likewise dignified with the Consular and triumphal honours, what more

[1] J. H. E. Crees, *Didasculus Patiens.*

could fortune add to his lustre and renown? After enormous wealth he sought not: an honourable share he possessed. As behind him he left surviving his daughter and his wife, he may be even accounted happy; since by dying whilst his credit was nowise impaired, his fame in its full splendour, his relations and friends yet in a state of security, he escaped the evils to come. For, as before us he was wont to express his wishes, that he might survive to see this truly blessed Age, and Trajan swaying the sovereignty, wishes which he uttered with presages as of what would surely ensue; so it was a wondrous consolation attending the quickness of his death, that thence he evaded the misery of the latter times, when Domitian, who had ceased to exert his tyranny by starts only and intermissions, was come now to rend the Commonwealth by cruelties without all respite, and to overthrow it as it were by one great and deadly stroke.

For, Agricola saw not the Court of the Senate besieged, nor the Senate enclosed by armed men, nor the butchery of so many men of Consular dignity, nor the flight and exile of so many ladies of the prime nobility, all effected in one continued havoc. Till then Carus Metius, the accuser, was only considerable for having been victorious in one bloody process; till then the cruel motions of Messallinus rang only within the palace at Alba;[1] and in those days Massa Bebius (afterwards so exercised in arraigning the innocent) was himself arraigned as a criminal. Presently after we, with our own hands, dragged Helvidius to prison and execution: we beheld the melancholy doom of Mauricus and Rusticus: we found ourselves besprinkled with the innocent blood of Senecio. Even Nero withheld his eyes from scenes of cruelty, he indeed ordered murders to be perpetrated, but saw not the perpetration. The principal part of our miseries under Domitian, was to be obliged to see him and be seen by him, at a time when all our sighs and sorrows were watched and marked down for condemnation; when that cruel countenance of his, always covered with a settled red, whence he hardened himself against all shame and blushing, served him to mark and recount all the pale horrors at once possessing so many men. Thou therefore, Agricola, art happy, not only as thy life was glorious, but as thy death was seasonable. According to the account of such who heard thy last words, thou didst accept thy fate cheerfully and with firmness, as if thou thus didst thy part to show the Emperor to be guiltless. But to myself and thy daughter, besides the anguish of having our father snatched from us, it proves a fresh accession of sorrow, that we had not an opportunity to attend thee in thy sickness, to solace thy sinking spirits, to please ourselves with seeing thee, please ourselves with embracing thee. Doubtless, we should have greedily received thy instructions and sayings, and en-

[1] A country palace of Domitian.

graved them for ever upon our hearts. This is our woe, this a wound to our spirit, that by the lot of long absence from thee thou wast already lost to us for four years before thy death. There is no question, excellent father, but that with whatever thy condition required thou wast honourably supplied, as thou wast attended by thy wife, one so full of tenderness for her husband; yet fewer tears accompanied thy course, and during thy last moments somewhat was wanting to satisfy thine eyes.

If for the *Manes* of the just any place be found; if, as philosophers hold, great spirits perish not with the body, pleasing be thy repose. Moreover, recall us thy family from this our weakness in regretting thee, and from these our effeminate wailings, to the contemplation of thy virtues, for which it were unjust to lament or to mourn. Let us rather adorn thy memory with deathless praises and (as far as our infirmities will allow) by pursuing and adopting thy excellencies. This is true honour, this the natural duty incumbent upon every near relation. This is also what I would recommend to thy daughter and thy wife, so to reverence the memory of a father, and a husband, as to be ever ruminating upon all his doings, upon all his sayings, and rather to adore his immortal name, rather the image of his mind than that of his person. Not that I mean to condemn the use of statues, such as are framed of marble or brass. But as the persons of men are frail and perishing, so are likewise the portraitures of men. The form of the soul is eternal, such as you cannot represent and preserve by the craft of hands or by materials foreign to its nature, nor otherwise than by a similitude and conformity of manners. Whatever we loved in Agricola, whatever we admired, remains, and will for ever remain implanted in the hearts of men, through an eternity of ages, and conveyed down in the voice of fame, in the record of things. For, many of the great ancients, by being buried in oblivion, have thence repeated the fate of men altogether mean and inglorious: but Agricola shall ever survive in his history here composed and transmitted to posterity.

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PLINY

The younger Pliny (A. D. 62-110), after receiving a good education at Rome, became a successful pleader at the Bar. At the age of seventeen he had been adopted by his uncle, the elder Pliny, and it was at his villa in the Bay of Naples that he was staying when the famous eruption of Vesuvius took place. The elder Pliny, who held a command in the Roman fleet and had gone to the assistance of the terrified people who dwelt at the foot of the mountain, was then killed. The letter from which the following description is taken

was written at the request of Tacitus who wished to have the account of an eyewitness for his history.

THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS

AFTER my uncle had gone I spent the rest of the day in study; for I had stayed at home for this purpose. Then I had a bath and supper and went to bed, but I got little sleep and that only in snatches. For several days beforehand we had had earthquakes, which did not alarm us much, as they are common in Campania. But that night the shocks were so violent that the universe seemed to be uprooted. Mother rushed into my bedroom; I was just getting up, meaning to wake her if she was asleep. We sat down in the courtyard of the house, which separated us by a small space from the sea. I don't know whether I ought to be called brave or foolhardy—I was only seventeen—but I sent for a volume of Livy, the historian, and went on reading it and even copying extracts from it, as though to-morrow would do.

Then in came a friend of my uncle's, who had lately arrived from Spain to visit him; seeing Mother and me sitting there and me actually reading, he spoke sharply to me for being so confident and to her for putting up with it. But I took no notice and remained glued to my book.

It was now six o'clock in the morning, but the light was still faint and tired-looking. The buildings round us were already trembling, and, though we stood on open ground, we should certainly be in danger if they fell. Then we decided to leave the town. When we got beyond the houses we stopped, and there went through an experience which was wonderful but very terrible. The carriages we had ordered to come with us could not keep still, even though they were on level ground and wedged with stones; we saw the sea sucked back to its inmost depths and driven back by the shaking of the earth. On the other side a black, dreadful cloud of fiery vapour yawned open, bursting into weird ribbons of fire, with twisting, forked tongues of flame: they were like flashes of lightning, only larger.

Then the Spanish friend took command and said sharply: "If your brother—your uncle (turning to me)—is still alive, he wants you to be saved; if he is dead he wants you to survive him. Why do you hesitate and linger here?" We said that our own safety was nothing to us if we were uncertain of his. So our friend waited no longer, but rushed away from the danger-zone as fast as he could go.

Soon afterward the cloud came down upon the earth and covered the sea; it had encircled and hidden the island of Capri and even

blotted out Cape Misenum. Then Mother began to beg and pray and finally to order me to escape as best I could. "You are young," she said, "I am old and good for nothing. I shall die happy, if only I have not caused your death." I said that I would not be saved without her, so I took her by the hand and made her hurry along. Already ashes were falling, but only here and there; I looked behind me and saw dense blackness just at our backs, spreading over the earth like a torrent. "Let us turn aside," I said, "while we can see; then we shan't be knocked down in the road and trampled on by the crowds in the dark."

We had hardly sat down before blackness overtook us, not the blackness of a cloudy or moonless night, but of a room that is shut up with the lamp out. You could hear women shrieking, children screaming, men shouting; some were looking for their parents, others for their children, and others for their wives or husbands, able to recognize them only by their voices; one man would be lamenting his own fate; another the fate of his dear ones; some in terror of death were praying to die. Many were praying to the gods; but most declared that the gods were no more, and that this was the last eternal night of the world.

Gradually it grew light; we did not think it was daylight, but only the sign of approaching fire; however, the fire did not come very near us, and the darkness fell again, and another heavy shower of ashes. All the time we kept on getting up and shaking ourselves; otherwise we should have been buried and crushed under their weight.

At last this darkness melted away into a kind of smoke or cloud and vanished; then followed real daylight, and even the sun came out, though it looked pale as in an eclipse. To our trembling eyes everything appeared different, being covered with deep drifts of ashes.

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APULEIUS

We know that Lucius Apuleius was born at Madaura, in Africa, early in the second century in the reign of the emperor Hadrian, but nothing is known of the date of his death. After receiving his education in Carthage and Athens he came to Rome where he became renowned as a man of letters. His most famous work is the well known *Metamorphoses, or the Golden Ass* in which he set forth his mystic and philosophical ideas under the guise of much buffoonery and indecency. The book owes its immortality to the fact that Apuleius knew how to tell a tale. In *Vindication*, from which the following extract is taken, he amusingly defends himself from the charge of having used magic for the purpose of inducing a wealthy widow to marry him.

IN PRAISE OF POVERTY

POVERTY has long been the handmaid of Philosophy; frugal, temperate, contented with little, eager for praise, averse from the things sought by wealth, safe in her ways, simple in her requirements, in her counsels a promoter of what is right. No one has she ever puffed up with pride, no one has she corrupted by the enjoyment of power, no one has she maddened with tyrannical ambition; for no pampering of the appetite or of the passions does she sigh, nor can she indulge it. But it is your fosterlings of wealth who are in the habit of perpetrating these disgraceful excesses, and others of a kindred nature. If you review all the greatest enormities that have been committed in the memory of mankind, you will not find a single poor man among the perpetrators; whilst, on the other hand, in the number of illustrious men hardly any of the rich are to be found; poverty has nurtured from his very cradle every individual in whom we find anything to admire and commend. Poverty, I say—she who in former ages was the foundress of all cities, the inventress of all arts, she who is guiltless of all offence, who is lavish of all glory, who has been honoured with every praise among all nations. For this same Poverty it was that, among the Greeks, showed herself just in Aristides, humane in Phocion, resolute in Epaminondas, wise in Socrates, and eloquent in Homer. It was the same Poverty, too, that for the Roman people laid the very earliest foundations of their sway, and that offers sacrifice to the immortal gods in their behalf, with the ladle and the dish of clay, even to this day.

If there were now sitting as judges at this trial C. Fabricius, Cneius Scipio, and Manius Curius, whose daughters by reason of their poverty, went home to their husbands portioned at the public expense, carrying with them the glories of their family and the money of the public; if Publicola, the expeller of the kings, and Agrippa, the reconciler of the people, the expense of whose funeral was, in consequence of their limited fortunes, defrayed by the Roman people, by contributions of the smallest coins; if Attilius Regulus, whose little field was, in consequence of a like poverty, cultivated at the public expense; if, in fine, all those ancient families, ennobled by consulships, censorships, and triumphs, could obtain a short respite, and return to light, and take part in this trial, would you then have dared to reproach a philosopher for his poverty, in the presence of so many consuls distinguished for theirs? . . . I could show that none of us are poor who do not wish for superfluities, and who possess the things that are necessary, which, by nature, are but few indeed. For he has the most who desires the least; he who wants but little is most likely to have

as much as he wants. It is with the mind just as with the body; in a healthy state it is lightly clad, but in sickness it is wrapped in cumbrous clothing; and it is a sure sign of infirmity to have many wants. It is with life just as with swimming: that man is the most expert who is the most disengaged from all incumbrances. . . . For my part, I have learned that in this especially the gods surpass mankind, that they have to satisfy no necessities. Hence it is that him among us who has the fewest possible necessities, I consider most strongly to resemble a god.

BIBLICAL LITERATURE

Introductory Note

IN THE Wisdom literature of the Bible we have the counterpart of the philosophy of Ancient Greece and Rome. Here we are able to trace very distinctly the development of the essay from the proverb. These proverbs are not only traditional sayings that were handed down from one generation to another but also succinct statements in which wise men embodied the results of their experience and observation. "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened are the words of the collectors of sentences." At first these proverbs are jumbled together by the compiler without sequence or method. Later they are arranged in groups under subjects. Sometimes the proverb is followed by a few lines of comment or elucidation. Thus:

> Wisdom is as good as an inheritance: Yea more excellent is it for them that see the sun. For wisdom is a defence, even as money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom preserveth the life of him that hath it.

There are many similar examples in *Ecclesiastes*.

In *The Literary Study of the Bible* Professor R. G. Moulton has shown by what natural and easy stages the proverb-cluster has developed into the essay proper. In the beginning we have disjointed paragraphs bearing on a single theme, it is true, but all equally independent. Any one could be removed without any detriment to the whole composition. Later, under the influence of a master hand, these bits are fused into a unity, not a sentence of which could be detached without loss. The books of Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, and the epistle of St. James abound in examples of both kinds and also afford instances of intermediate types illustrating the transition from one to the other.

Unfortunately the conventional typographical arrangement of the English Bible quite obscures the literary form of its contents, making it very difficult to distinguish between drama and essay, history and lyric. Yet to be able to recognize these is to increase immeasurably the ranges of one's appreciation, and the reader who desires to explore the riches of Biblical literature is recommended to read the *Modern Reader's Bible,* when he will find the Bible, for the first time, printed in a manner that really makes its literary structure plain.

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ECCLESIASTICUS

THIS is one of the Apocryphal books, that is, it is not accepted for the establishment of doctrine, though it is appointed to be read for instruction. As a matter of fact it is full of literary interest, particularly from the point of view of the essay. The two examples that follow illustrate the sound common sense that characterizes *Ecclesiasticus*. More than that, they show that the writer is not content any longer to be merely a collector of wise sayings. He has, it is true, a number of these at his command. They come readily enough to point a moral or to warn against evil, but he makes them pass through the crucible of his mind so as to form a unity of his own creation and not a collection that he has merely compiled.

I. ON FEASTING

IF THOU sit at a bountiful table, be not greedy upon it, and say not, There is much meat on it. Remember that a wicked eye is an evil thing.

> What is created more evil than an eye?
> Therefore it weepeth upon every occasion.

Stretch not thine hand whithersoever it looketh, and thrust it not with him into the dish. Judge of thy neighbour by thyself; and be discreet in every point. Eat, as it becometh a man, those things which are set before thee; and devour not, lest thou be hated. Leave off first for manners' sake; and be not unsatiable, lest thou offend. When thou sittest among many, reach not thy hand out first of all.

A very little is sufficient for a man well nurtured, and he fetcheth not his wind short upon his bed. Sound sleep cometh of moderate eating; he riseth early and his wits are with him; but the pain of watching, and choler, and pangs of the belly are with an unsatiable man. And if thou hast been forced to eat, arise, go forth, vomit, and thou shalt have rest. My son, hear me, and despise me not, and at the last thou shalt find as I told thee: in all thy works be quick, so shall there no sickness come unto thee.

Whoso is liberal of his meat men shall speak well of him; and the report of his good housekeeping will be believed. But against him that is a niggard of his meat the whole city shall murmur; and the testimonies of his niggardness shall not be doubted of.

Shew not thy valiantness in wine, for wine hath destroyed many. The furnace proveth the edge by dipping, so doth wine the hearts of the

proud by drunkenness. Wine is as good as life to a man, if it be drunk moderately: what life is then to a man that is without wine? for it was made to make men glad. Wine measurably drunk and in season bringeth gladness of the heart, and cheerfulness of the mind: but wine drunken with excess maketh bitterness of the mind, with brawling and quarrelling. Drunkenness increaseth the rage of a fool till he offend; it diminisheth strength, and maketh wounds.

Rebuke not thy neighbour at the wine, and despise him not in his mirth; give him no despiteful words, and press not upon him with urging him to drink. If thou be made the master of a feast, lift not thyself up, but be among them as one of the rest; take diligent care for them, and so sit down. And when thou hast done all thy office, take thy place, that thou mayest be merry with them, and receive a crown for thy well ordering of the feast. Speak, thou that art the elder, for it becometh thee, but with sound judgment; and hinder not music. Pour not out words where there is a musician, and shew not forth wisdom out of time.

As a signet of carbuncle
Set in gold,
So is a concert of music in a banquet of wine.
As a signet of emerald
In a work of gold,
So is the melody of music with pleasant wine.

Speak, young man, if there be need of thee; and yet scarcely when thou art twice asked. Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in few words; be as one that knoweth and yet holdeth his tongue. If thou be among great men, make not thyself equal with them; and when ancient men are in place, use not many words. Before the thunder goeth lightning; and before a shamefaced man shall go favour. Rise up betimes, and be not the last; but get thee home without delay. There take thy pastime, and do what thou wilt; but sin not by proud speech. And for these things bless him that made thee, and hath replenished thee with his good things.

II. RETRIBUTION AND VENGEANCE

WHOSO casteth a stone on high casteth it on his own head; and a deceitful stroke shall make wounds. Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that setteth a trap shall be taken therein. He that worketh mischief, it shall fall upon him, and he shall not know whence it cometh. Mockery and reproach are from the proud;

but vengeance, as a lion, shall lie in wait for them. They that rejoice at the fall of the righteous shall be taken in the snare; and anguish shall consume them before they die. Malice and wrath, even these are abominations; and the sinful man shall have them both. He that revengeth shall find vengeance from the Lord; and he will surely keep his sins in remembrance.

Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One man beareth hatred against another; and doth he seek pardon from the Lord? He sheweth no mercy to a man, which is like himself: and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins? If he that is but flesh nourish hatred, who will intreat for pardon of his sins? Remember thy end, and let enmity cease; remember corruption and death, and abide in the commandments. Remember the commandments, and bear no malice to thy neighbour: remember the covenant of the Highest, and wink at ignorance. Abstain from strife, and thou shalt diminish thy sins: for a furious man will kindle strife. A sinful man disquieteth friends, and maketh debate among them that be at peace.

As is the fuel of the fire,
  So will it burn
And as the stoutness of the strife is,
  So will it burn.

As is the strength of the man,
  So will be his wrath;
And as is his wealth,
  So will he exalt his anger.

An hasty contention kindleth a fire; and an hasty fighting sheddeth blood.

* * *

ECCLESIASTES

In this book the grouping-process by which proverbs are sorted and clustered is carried a stage farther and the resulting essays are themselves arranged in an ordered sequence. All the essays work out or illustrate a single formula: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The thoughtful man surveys the world around him, taking stock of all the activities of mankind, and he finds that all these things fail to bring any lasting satisfaction. Wisdom no longer presents any solution of the incomprehensible scheme of things. In successive essays this theme is elaborated. For our purpose the question whether the date of *Ecclesiastes* is earlier or later than that of *Ecclesiasticus* has little significance. The important point to note is that, structurally, it represents a later stage.

THE VANITY OF DESIRE

HE THAT loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this also is vanity. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?

The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and if he begetteth a son, there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour, that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life which God hath given him: for this is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease. If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he. For it cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun nor known anything: this hath more rest than the other. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled. For what advantage hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living? Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire; this is also vanity and vexation of spirit. That which hath been is named already, and

it is known that it is man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better? For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

* * *

ST. JAMES

The following essay illustrates very clearly the continuity of Wisdom literature. The indebtedness of the writer to *Ecclesiasticus* is apparent. Take, as an example, the following passage from the earlier book and compare it with the present extract from the epistle: "If thou blow a spark, it shall burn; and if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched: and both these shall come out of thy mouth. Curse the whisperer and double-tongued: for he hath destroyed many that were at peace. . . . The stroke of a whip maketh a mark in the flesh; but the stroke of a tongue will break bones. Many have fallen by the edge of the sword; yet not so many as they that have fallen because of the tongue."

This book is styled an epistle. It has, however, been termed more aptly "a miscellany of Christian wisdom," and bears a stronger resemblance to the other Wisdom books than to the epistles of St. Paul.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SPEECH

BE NOT many masters, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we all offend. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same

mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain yield both salt water and fresh.

ANCIENT INDIA

Introductory Note

(BY E. J. THOMAS, M.A., D.LITT.)

INDIA is remarkable for possessing a civilization that can be traced back to prehistoric times without any catastrophic break. It is this fact which explains some of the peculiar features of its ancient literature. The literature, composed mostly in Sanskrit, was for centuries preserved only by memory, and this method of recording was continued long after the introduction of writing. It was while this practice still went on that the different forms of literary art, such as epic, lyric, and drama, became fixed, and their development was naturally influenced by the fact that all had to be learnt by heart. In the case of the two great epics we find that an original story has been expanded by episodes and by further stories or discourses supposed to be uttered by some of the characters. Such is especially the case with the *Mahābhārata,* in which whole treatises have been inserted, like the *Bhagavadgītā,* a discussion between Arjuna and Krishna before the great battle, teaching man's social duties and his religious end.

The practice of dovetailing one work into another was the result of a desire to aid the memory by connecting the separate works into a whole, and naturally such a practice did not lend itself to the development of the essay-form proper. What we have to look for in Indian literature, instead of essays in the Western sense, is that kind of lighter and shorter discourse which, if literary methods had been different, might have stood quite independently as an essay. Of these there are many in the *Mahābhārata.* After the description of the great war between the sons of Pāṇḍu and their cousins, which forms the basis of the narrative, one of the victorious heroes, Yudhishthira, is faced with the problem whether he was justified in taking up arms against his own kinsmen. He puts the problem before his religious teacher, who replies by repeating to him the *Aśmagīta,* a discourse attributed to the ancient sage Aśman. It is not a direct answer to the difficulty raised, but a discourse on the varied destinies of men, which are explained not in the usual Indian way as due to the individual's previous action (*karma*), but as inevitably constituting the very texture of experience. The only moral is, do your duty and face the inevitable. The original is in verse, but it is just the kind of work

which in the age of Montaigne or Bacon would have formed a moral essay.

The writing of history holds a peculiar place in Indian literature. The earliest historical efforts are found, as they are in Greece, in the epic poems. They are the first naïve attempts to record things that happened, without any conception of the need of some means to test their truth. But in Greece, through the genius of Herodotus and Thucydides, history advanced in two bounds to the dignity of a science and a special type of literature.

The development of history-writing in the East was what might have taken place in Greece if these two geniuses had never appeared. In India it never became distinctly separated from panegyric and genealogy. The Indian works are the *purāṇas,* long poems modelled on the style of the epics, in which the history is always mingled with legend, panegyric, and theology. They record the genealogies of various royal families, and usually include what to the primitive mind is equally historical—the creation of the world and other important instances of divine activity. The chief purāṇas are reckoned at eighteen. They do not give one continuous narrative, but in addition to their cosmogonies and religious legends they also debate special theological and quasi-historical questions, and among them we find the counterpart of the historical essay. The extract here given from the *Vishnu Purāṇa* tells in the form of a prophecy the decay of morals and government, and then the restoration of a golden age, when a portion of the god Vishnu, who has already appeared as Krishna, will be reincarnated as Kalkī. This is probably one of the latest parts of the *Purāṇa,* and its picture of degenerate social conditions appears to be due to the confusion in North West India after the first Muhammadan inroads in the eighth century.

An important and extensive part of Indian culture is found in the scientific literature—works on philosophy, grammar, literary style, music, and medicine. The influence of learning by heart is seen here also. Often the works are in verse, or the *sūtra*-style may be used. In the latter each principle or tenet is expressed with the greatest terseness in a *sūtra,* a short phrase of a few words. The sūtras were not meant to be intelligible by themselves, but each was learnt by the pupil, and then expounded at length by the teacher. What we now possess are these *sūtras* with extensive commentaries composed by scholars of different schools.

Perhaps the best known of the philosophical systems is the *Vedānta,* which teaches that the one ultimate reality is Brahma, and that the chief end of man is union with him. But the *Vedānta-sūtras* are interpreted so differently by different schools that they really form independent metaphysical systems. The school of Śankara, a philosopher of the eighth century A. D., emphasizes so much the non-reality of

everything but Brahma that it is known as the system of non-duality. Sankara's treatment of special points sometimes develops into essays, such as his discussion of the difficulty how the Scriptures (*Vedas*) can be eternal, seeing that the world to which they refer is being periodically destroyed and re-made (*Vedānta-sūtras*, i, 3, 30). Our extract on the unreality of dreams is from the commentary on iii, 2, 3.

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THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

THE following extract from the *Mahābhārata* occurs in the *Aśmagīta*, a discourse attributed to the sage Aśman (Book XII, *Śāntiparvan*, chap. 28). It has been specially translated for the present collection by Dr. E. J. Thomas.

DUTY AND DESTINY

WHEN the soul of a man is born into the world, then various pains and pleasures pursue it.

Either pain or pleasure may overtake it, but whichever it is, it soon bears away his understanding, as the wind the clouds.

He thinks, "I am of high birth, I am successful, I am no mere man"; and with these three thoughts his mind is soaked.

With his mind attached to pleasures he scatters what his father has collected, and when impoverished he thinks it well to take what belongs to others.[1]

They who live thus for twenty or thirty years shall not attain the full span of a hundred years.

Now the source of all mental pains is confusion of mind or it is an onset of anguish. There is no third course.

Even so are these and various other pains that come upon a man in this world, and so are those due to worldly attachment.

For like two wolves old age and death devour creatures, the strong and the weak, the short and the tall.

No man can ever escape old age and death, even if he conquer this earth as far as the shores of the ocean.

Whatever pleasure or pain comes upon creatures, all should be accepted with submission. There is no way of escape.

Our lot in early or middle life and also in old age is not to be avoided, and what we expect may never come.

[1] Here and elsewhere a verse on the duty of kings is omitted, which appears to belong rather to the narrative which includes this discourse.

Separation from pleasant things, contact with the unpleasant, the useful and the useless, pleasure and pain, follow their fated course.

The birth of creatures and likewise their decease, gain and loss, all this is foreordained.

Scent, colour, taste, and touch come about through their own nature. So likewise pleasures and pains follow their fated course.

Seats, beds, chariots, food, and drink are assigned to all beings in the course of time.

Even physicians fall ill, the strong become weak, the vigorous become effeminate. Varied is the course of time.

Birth in a high family, vigour, health, and beauty, prosperity and objects of enjoyment come through fate.

The poor have many sons, though they wish it not, and the rich are childless. Varied is the action of fate.

A rich man is seen to perish in his youth, while a poor man though afflicted reaches an old age of a hundred years.

The needy are seen to live long, and those born in a wealthy family perish like moths.

Often in the world the prosperous are found unable to eat, while the poor everywhere can digest logs of wood.

Thinking he is compelled by circumstances the villain through discontent doing whatever he likes commits sin.

Hunting, dice, women, drink, and quarrels are blamed by the wise; yet learned men are seen to be addicted to them.

In the course of time all things in the world, whether desired or undesired, come upon all creatures. No other cause is seen.

Air, space, fire, the moon and sun, day and night, stars, rivers, and mountains—who makes and supports them all? Cold, heat, and rain recur in the course of time. Even so is the pleasure and pain of men.

Neither drugs nor sacred verses, nor libations nor the repetition of spells can save a man from death or old age.

As a log floating on the ocean may meet a log, even so do creatures meet and part again.

Men attended by women, song, and music, and the orphans that eat others' food—to both time acts impartially.

Thousands of mothers and fathers arise to us in the course of rebirth, and hundreds of sons, but whose are they, or whose are we?

No one belongs to this one, this one belongs to no one. This meeting with wife, kinsmen, or friends is as a meeting on the high road.

Where am I? Where am I going? Who am I? How came I here? Why should I grieve? Thus should he fix his mind.

Fleeting is dear companionship, and rebirth is like a wheel, and so all this—brother, mother, father, friend—is as a meeting on the high road.

The wise perceive the unseen other world as if before their eyes. But without transgressing the Scriptures let one who desires to know practise faith.

Let one who knows do his duty to his ancestors and the gods, and practise religion. Let him sacrifice and pursue his threefold end (of profit, pleasure, and religion).

No one is aware that the world is plunged in the deep ocean of time infested with the great crocodiles of old age and death.

Many physicians with their attendants, who have studied the whole lore of medicine, are found to be suffering from illnesses.

They drink bitter drugs and various preparations of butter, but they do not pass beyond death, any more than the ocean beyond its borders.

So too those who practise austerities and are devoted to study, who are bounteous and perform sacrifices, do not escape old age and death.

For days return not to any creatures that are born, nor months, nor years, nor half months, nor nights.

In course of time changing man must take the wide unchanging path that all creatures follow.

Whether the body outlives life or life the body, this meeting with wives and other relations is as a meeting on the high road.

This permanent association is not attained by anyone even in one life, much less in another existence.

No man can behold heaven and hell, but the Scriptures are the eyes of the good. Practise their teaching in this world.

After leading the life of a student one should carry out family duties and perform sacrifices to satisfy the debt to one's ancestors, to the gods, and to men.

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THE VISHṆU PURĀṆA

THE following extract is taken from the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* (IV, 24) and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. E. J. Thomas.

THE RETURN OF THE GOLDEN AGE

IN THE last age[1] barbarians and other tribes and men of the lowest caste will rule on the banks of the rivers (of the Punjab) the Indus, Dārvikā, and Chandrabhāgā, and in Kashmir. They will all be reigning at the same time over the earth. They will be men of

[1] In Indian cosmology the period between one creation and the next is divided into four ages, the last and worst being the Kali-age.

little grace, of violent temper, ever delighting in falsehood and evil; slayers of women, children, and cows, delighting in taking others' property, of little strength, and they will rapidly rise and fall. They will have short lives but great desires and very little religion.

Mixing with them the various countries will everywhere adopt barbarian customs, and becoming disordered the people will perish. Then day by day with the gradual decrease of religion and wealth the world will go to destruction: rank will depend on property, religion on wealth, union of husband and wife on lust, success in law on falsehood. Womanhood will be valued merely for sensual gratification, and the earth for its jewels and metals. The mere sacred thread will constitute brahminhood, and the only sign of the (four) stages of life will be the wearing of marks. Livelihood will depend on dishonesty and safety on weakness. Learning will consist in browbeating and presumption. Religion will consist merely in bounty, goodness in wealth, and purity in ceremonial bathing. Marriage will consist in mere choice, and dignity in wearing fine clothes. A sacred bathing-place will consist in water brought from afar, and on the earth corrupted with the basest faults the lowest one among all the castes who is powerful will be king.

Thus the people unable to bear the burden of taxes due to rapacious men will take refuge in the valleys of the mountains. Their food will be honey, vegetables, roots, fruits, leaves, and flowers; and their numerous offspring protected only by garments of bark will endure cold, wind, heat, and rain. No one will live more than twenty-three years, and unceasingly in this Kali-age all the people approach destruction.

When religion as taught in the Scriptures and in the law-books has almost come to an end, and the Kali-age is running out, a portion of the Lord Vāsudeva (Krishna), the creator of the whole world, and Lord of creatures that move and those that move not, whose nature is beginning, end, all, Brahma, the ātman in its true form, shall descend into the world in the form of Kalkī, endowed with the eight wondrous qualities, and be born in the village of Sambhala, in the house of an eminent brahmin named Vishṇuyaśas. With the force of his glory unchecked he will destroy all barbarians and savages of evil deeds and thoughts.

He will establish religion in the whole world, and then quite at the end of the Kali-age the minds of those that are awakened shall become pure as spotless crystal. And from these human beings, who shall be the seed of future generations, changed by the virtue of that time, offspring shall be produced, and this offspring shall conform to the morals of the golden age. And here it is said:

> When moon and sun and the star Tishya,
> And likewise the planet Jupiter,

Are in one constellation joined,
Then shall the golden age return.

* * *

THE VEDĀNTA-SŪTRAS

THE following extract is taken from Śankara's commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras* (iii, 2, 3) and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. E. J. Thomas.

THE UNREALITY OF DREAMS

THE world of dreams is mere illusion (*māyā*), and does not exist in the true sense. Why? Because a dream does not manifest itself with the totality of existence that real things have. Now what does totality mean here? It consists in the conditions of place, time, cause, and the circumstance that the existence cannot be refuted. For these are conditions that apply to real things, but not to things in a dream.

Now in a dream there is no space for chariots and such things, for they would have no room in the limited region of the body. But granted this, things in a dream are in fact seen outside the body, for they are apprehended as separated by space, and Scripture speaks [1] of a dream outside the body, when it says, "away from the nest the immortal [soul] moves, the immortal one goes wherever he wishes." This distinction of staying in and going out would have no good sense if the individual [soul] did not really go out. To this we reply that it is not so, for a sleeping individual cannot go and return a hundred leagues in a moment of time. And sometimes a person tells of a dream in which he went somewhere without returning, and says that when he was lying on his bed in the land of the Kurus overcome by sleep, he went to the land of the Panchālas, and while there awoke. Now if he had really gone away from his body, he would have awakened in the land of the Panchālas to which he had gone, but in fact he awakens in the Kuru country; and while he imagines himself going with his body to another place, others standing by see it lying on the bed. Further, the various places that he sees in his dream are not as they are in reality, and if he really did go about and see them, they would appear to him like what they are when he is awake. And Scripture declares that a dream is within the body, when it says, "but when he moves about in dream," down to, "in his own body he moves about at pleasure." Hence the Scripture passage about "away from

[1] This and the next quotation are from the *Brhadāranyaka Upanishad*.

the nest" must be explained in a figurative sense, otherwise there would be a contradiction between Scripture and fact.

Next, in a dream there is contradiction with time. A person asleep at night dreams that it is day in India. In the same way one sometimes lives through many series of years in a dream that lasts but a short time.

Further, in a dream the requisite causes of thought and action do not exist. For owing to the organs being turned inwards, the individual has no eyes or other organs for perceiving chariots and so on, and from where could he get material for chariots, etc., in the twinkling of an eye?

Lastly, these chariots and other objects that are produced in a dream are refuted by the waking state. They are easily refuted even by the dream itself, when it is seen that the end contradicts the beginning. For sometimes what was considered in the dream to be a chariot becomes in a moment a man, or what was considered to be a man suddenly becomes a tree. Scripture also clearly teaches the non-existence of such things in a dream, when it says, "there are no chariots, no horses, no roads." Hence what is seen in a dream is mere illusion.

PERSIA

Introductory Note

(BY REUBEN LEVY, M.A.)

THE essay as a literary *genre* is not native to Persia; but in most treatises the various chapters are self-contained wholes, possessing the form of the essay. The two examples which follow are the work of two Persians who differed widely from one another in character and achievement. The first, the Niẓámu 'l Mulk, was the vizier of two Seljúq princes who rose to authority on the decline of the Eastern Caliphate of Baghdad, and at royal suggestion he compiled a *Treatise on the Art of Government,* of which the essay that follows is one chapter. Legend makes him the schoolmate of Omar Khayyám and of the "Grand Master of the Assassins," Hasan-i Ṣabbáḥ. History has disproved the legend, and the *Treatise* certainly deals harshly with the sect of the Assassins. When the vizier was murdered in 1092 A. D., it was probably by an agent of theirs. The second essayist was the poet and satirist Úbayd-i Zákání, who lived at the Mongol Court of Baghdad and died in 1370. He is probably the greatest of Moslem satirists, though his work is often highly scurrilous and lascivious. In his work *The Ethics of the Nobility* he mocks at the current conception of morals, contrasting it with that of the past.

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THE NIẒÁMU 'L MULK

THE following essay from the *Treatise on the Art of Government* has been specially translated for this volume by Reuben Levy, M.A., Lecturer in Persian in the University of Cambridge.

ON THE COURTIERS AND FAMILIARS OF A KING

NO KING can be without worthy courtiers with whom he may be at his ease and behave without restraint. For the constant society of dignitaries, of princes, and of generals, by emboldening them, detracts from the dignity and majesty of the sovereign. Speaking generally, the king should not make a familiar of anyone whom he has appointed to office, for the reason that the freedom which he enjoys

on the king's carpet may lead him to practise extortion and so do harm to the king's subjects. The governor of a province should for ever stand in awe of the king, while the courtier must be ever at his ease, so that the king may derive pleasure from him and the kingly mind find relaxation through him. They should have a fixed time for one another; and it should be after the king has held audience and the great officers have all departed.

There are certain advantages in having a courtier. One of these is that he is a friend to the king; another, this, that seeing he is in the king's company day and night, he acts as his bodyguard; another, that should any danger appear (which Heaven forfend!) he sacrifices his own body and makes it a shield to ward off the peril; still a fourth is that the king may hold conversation on a thousand topics with his courtiers in a way impossible with officers and functionaries of the king. Fifthly, courtiers, like spies, bring the king information about his vassals. Sixthly, they converse in the freest manner of all things, good or ill, being drunk or sober; and in that there is great benefit.

The courtier should be essentially honourable and of excellent character, of cheerful disposition and irreproachable in respect of his religion, discreet and a clean liver. He should be able to tell a story and repeat a narrative either humorous or grave, and he should remember news. He should also be consistently a carrier of pleasant tidings and the announcer of felicitous happenings. He should also have acquaintance of backgammon and chess, and if he can play a musical instrument and can handle a weapon, it is all the better.

The courtier also must ever be in agreement with the king. Whatever he hears the king say, he must cry "Bravo!" or "Excellent!" and let him never play the pedagogue, saying "Do this," or "Don't do that," or "Why did you do that?" or "This is a thing one should not do." Such conduct will prove disagreeable to the king and may lead to dislike. However, when questions arise of wine or amusements, or of excursions out of doors, or of convivial gatherings, or of hunting or polo-playing and the like, it is permissible for courtiers to deal with them, for they are practised in these matters.

On the other hand, whenever the question is one appertaining to kingship, or campaigning, or raiding, or administration, or supplies, or gifts, or war and peace, or the army, or the king's subjects, and the like matters, then such question had better be decided with the aid of the vizier and the great experts in these faculties, and the elders of experience, in order that affairs may follow their proper course.

There are some kings who have made familiars of a physician or astrologer in order to learn how to govern the people, what fate is destined for themselves, or what they should do; and their constitution and temperament have been carefully watched. Now the astrologer keeps observation of times and hours, and in any matter in which the

king desires to engage, the astrologer gives advice and chooses the propitious hour. But there are some kings who have refused to have dealings with these two, saying: "The physician restrains us from enjoyable foods and agreeable pleasures, gives us medicines when we are suffering neither from sickness nor disease and his one object is to cause illness. And the astrologer is no better. He forbids everything that is worth doing, sets restrictions upon matters of importance, and spoils all our pleasure in life." It were better therefore to summon these two only when there is need.

Still, if the courtier is a man of the world, one who has been here and there and seen service with the great, it is to the good. When men wish to know the disposition and character of the king they judge it by analogy from his familiars. If they are pleasant-tempered, good-natured, generous, modest, and patient, people draw a corresponding inference and conclude that the king is not notoriously ill-tempered, nor ill-disposed, nor of evil way of life and conduct, nor miserly.

Every courtier should have a rank and position allotted to him. Some should be permitted to be seated while others should be required to remain standing, as has been the custom from ancient times in the presence of kings and caliphs; the caliph always having as his courtiers the men who served his father. The Sultan of Ghazna always had twenty courtiers, of whom ten might be seated while the other ten stood. They derived this custom and practice from the Sámánid dynasty.

Lastly, courtiers should be well remunerated by the king, who should assure their being honoured amongst his retainers, whilst they in their turn should keep watch on themselves, be of upright conduct and the king's friends.

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UBAYD-I ZÁKÁNÍ

THE following essay from *The Ethics of the Nobility* has been specially translated for this volume by Reuben Levy, M.A., Lecturer in Persian in the University of Cambridge.

ON COURAGE

I. THE ABROGATED VIEW

THE wise have declared that in the human soul are three distinct faculties which are the mainsprings of various functions. The first is the faculty of speech, which is the source of thought and reason; the second the faculty of energy, which provides the impulse towards

engaging in affairs, and the desire for advancement and self-assertion; and the third is the sensual faculty, that brings into operation eating, drinking, and sexual relationship. Let a man have in him that passion which may be called the "domestic-bestial"—which is the prime cause of the search for food—or let him feel a moderated desire for speech or for the acquisition of special branches of learning, and the result will be that he acquires the science of philosophy. But let him have, though in moderated measure, the passion which may be called the "feral," that is to say the faculty of energy, and let there be indication in him that he has subordinated the reasoning faculty, then, by the predominance of the animal, his soul will be courageous. If, however, the "domestic-bestial" be present in duly balanced measure, and in addition his passion be obedient to reason, then there results a predominance of virtue. Now take these three predominances—*i.e.*, the philosophical, the animal, and the virtuous—and mingle them together. The result will be that all will be equally balanced and will achieve their perfection. That condition of the predominances is called equilibrium.

Now according to the wise, that man is courageous who is possessed of noble character and lofty purpose, tranquillity of soul and perseverance, patience and energy, humility, ardour, and gentleness. On him that has these qualities they have set their approval, for it is by them that a man may hold his head high amongst his fellow-creatures. The virtue of courage has never been accounted a disgrace: nay rather, the annals of war and battle have declared the possessor of it worthy to travel the path of glory, and the saying used to be: "The essentials to a man are valiance, bravery, boldness, and sagacity."

II. THE ADOPTED VIEW

Our teachers declare that to a man who finds himself in a position of peril and who advances to give battle or to attack one of two things is inevitable; either he vanquishes and slays the enemy, or the opposite happens. Should he kill the enemy he must shoulder the guilt of innocent bloodshed, and the punishment for it must sooner or later come upon him. If the opponent is victorious, Hell is assured for him. If that be so, how can a reasoning person do a thing which must lead to one or other of these consequences?

What argument in support is more clear than this, that wherever there is a wedding, or a dance of dervishes, or a merry gathering where good food and sweets and robes and gold are given away, there you will find amongst the invited guests degenerates, rakes, musicians, and jesters; but wherever the provision made consists of arrows or spears, then some fool of a man is remembered and told: "*You* are a man, a hero, a crusher of armies, a valiant champion"? It is he that is put

to face the arrows, and when he is killed in the fray the town rakes and effeminates can wag their tails in mockery at him and recite:

> Arrow, axe, and spear are of little use to me,
> Cakes and wine and minstrels far rather would I see.

And while the hero is fighting for his life in the battle, the rakes and effeminates look on from a distance and say to one another: "By heaven! Live a rake and live long."

Let a man have resolve. On the day of battle he must follow the good example of the champions of Khurasan who say:

> *Men* leap into the fray,
> *We* leap into the hay.

Indeed, the champions and heroes of to-day have this verse inscribed on their seal-rings:

> An opportune flight true victory is,
> When warrior flees, good fortune is his.

ARABIA

Introductory Note

(BY REUBEN LEVY, M.A.)

IN ARABIC literature, which excels in its historical writings, Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun stands out as the greatest philosophical historian. He was born at Tunis in 1332 and adopted a political career, during which he was for a time a minister of the Sultan of Granada and ambassador at the court of Pedro the Cruel of Castile. Between 1384 and 1399 he seems to have been without office and led the life of a landed owner in the Fayyum, where he wrote the main part of the Prolegomena to his history of the world called *The Book of Examples*. In these Prolegomena, of which our essay is a part, he attempts to derive the general laws and the universal truths underlying the events of history, and the vicissitudes in national fortunes. He pictures the characteristics of civilization and infers that nomad life is superior to that of settled cultures.

In 1401, after taking part in an Egyptian expedition against Tamerlane and heading a delegation to the Mongol chief, he returned to Cairo. There he died in 1406.

* * *

ABDURRAHMAN IBN KHALDUN

THE following passage from the Prolegomena to the *Book of Examples* has been specially translated for this volume by Reuben Levy, M.A., Lecturer in Persian in the University of Cambridge.

A REFUTATION OF ALCHEMY [1]

THIS science seeks to find the material by which the composition of gold and silver may be artificially perfected, and it explains the method by which this result is attained. The alchemists experiment with substances of all kinds after discovering their properties and strengths, in the hope that they may, by a guess, light upon the material endowed with the necessary qualities. Thus they try even

[1] Some of the more abstruse portions of the original have been omitted from the translation.

animal substances such as bones, feathers, hair, eggs, and excreta, in addition to minerals. The science also pretends to explain the processes by which the material may pass from (latent) power to activity such as the dissolution of bodies into their component parts, by means of sublimation and distillation, by solidifying the liquids given off from them, by means of calcination, and by pounding hard bodies with a mortar and pestle, etc.

According to their statements there results from these operations a natural substance that they call "elixir," which, when applied to a mineral substance, such as lead, tin, or copper after a simple operation preparing them to receive the form of gold or silver, turns them into pure gold after some heating in a fire. They call this elixir, when they use their own enigmatical terms, "the soul," while "the body" means the substances to which they apply it.

Both in the past and in recent times men have continually been writing on the subject, and sometimes books have been published by persons who were not of the art. According to the alchemists the greatest master of the art was Jábir ibn Hayyán,[1] and they go so far as to call it "Jábir's Science." He wrote seventy treatises on the subject, all of them obscured by enigmatical terms, and, in his words: "no one has the key to them unless he has included in his learning the whole of science."

Maslama al-Majrítí, the Andalusian doctor, also wrote a book, which he called *The Degree of the Doctor,* making it a companion to another volume on magic and talismans which he entitled *The Ultimate Aim of the Doctor,* and he asserted that these two compositions were the two goals of philosophy and the harvests of all sciences and that "anyone who did not understand them, lost the fruit both of science and philosophy." But his discourse in this book of his, like all their discourses, is full of enigmas, impossible of comprehension to anyone who has not studied the peculiar terminology of this art. We shall indicate lower down the reason for their use of such cryptic and enigmatic language.[2]

I will here set down a letter from Abu Bekr ibn Bashrún to Ibnu 'l-Samh (both of them disciples of Maslama) on this art, and you will see from his words, if you pay them the attention they deserve, what he believes about it. After the Introduction, which has no bearing on the substance of the letter, Ibn Bashrún says: "All the preliminary ideas upon which this noble art is based have been noted by the ancients and reported by the philosophers, such ideas being knowledge of the composition of minerals, the formation of stones and jewels, the structure of countries and places.

"(Because they are familiar) I refrain from enlarging on them, but I will explain what is necessary for you to know about this art. I will

[1] The "Geber" of European writers.

[2] A section on other authors is here omitted.

begin with the knowledge that is needed. The adepts say that those who seek proficiency in this science must know three things; first, the possibility of attainment, second, out of what substance it can be attained, and thirdly, how it can be attained. Once he knows these three things and has mastered them, then he has been successful in his search and has reached his objective in this science. I spare you the investigation for the discovery of its existence and the search for proof of its possibility, by sending you a portion of the *elixir*. As for the question: 'Out of what substance can it be attained?' the alchemists mean by this the search for the state which makes the 'reaction' possible. They say that the possibility of the 'reaction' exists virtually in all things, because at the beginning they were compounded of the four elements and in the end will decompose into them. But there are some things in which the 'reaction' exists only in potentiality and not in fact. The reason is that there are some things that can be resolved into their elements, and others that cannot. Those that can, may be treated and manipulated, and it is they that proceed from potential to actual 'reaction.' What you must certainly know, may Allah prosper you, is what stone will most successfully decompose in order that the 'reaction' may be possible from it. . . . You must know the method of its 'reaction,' what quantities are to be used, what are its proper 'seasons,' and how the 'spirit' is combined with it and how 'the soul' can be introduced into it. . . .

"Now it is necessary for you to understand and to know that all the philosophers have praised 'the soul' and asserted that it is that which controls the body, supports it and protects it and works within it. This is so because the body, when the soul leaves it, dies and becomes cold, being without power of movement or self-defence, because it is without life or illumination. I have only mentioned the inanimate 'body' and 'the soul' because this art (of alchemy) resembles (in its subjects) the body of man. . . . Man is subjected to reaction because of the conflict in the composition of his elements. If his elements agreed and were at one, without any separate aims and without discordance, the soul could not leave the body, which would exist eternally. Praise be to Him that regulates all things! . . .

"Our intelligence comprehends that stones offer greater resistance to fire than 'spirits,' in the same way that you see gold, iron, or copper more resistant to fire than sulphur, quicksilver, and other volatile things. I maintain that bodies were 'spirits' in the first place . . . and when excessive heat is applied to them they revert to their original state. . . . Everything that is capable of being reduced to nothing is so reduced by fire, through the separation of the tenuous from the solid and the interpenetration of part with part without dissolution or assimilation. This is a compounding and a juxtaposition, not a mixture, and for that reason their separation, like that of oil and water,

etc., is simple. . . . Further the disintegration of bodies cannot take place without spirits, and you apprehend this fact—May Allah guide you aright—and you must know that this dissolution in animal bodies is Truth itself, which is not destroyed nor does it diminish. . . . Real disintegration of a solution takes place only through what has an affinity with it and repels from it the heat of fire until grossness ceases and its elements change their condition into one of subtilty or grossness, as the case may be. When bodies reach the limit of dissolution or subtilty, there appears in them a disposition for becoming fixed, for transmutation or for conversion or for penetration; and every experiment in which certainty is not apparent from the beginning is valueless. . . .

"Let us now pass on to the stone which makes the 'reaction' possible, according to the statements of the philosophers. They disagree on the matter, some asserting that it exists in plants, others in minerals, and still others in all things. There is no need for us to decide the controversy . . . for my discourse is already extremely long. . . . Let us turn our attention now to Harrání who says that the 'reaction' exists in both animals and plants, the proof being that both of these are so constituted by nature that they can absorb nourishment, which sustains them and develops them. Plants do not possess either the subtle nature or the power which exists in animals and therefore the doctors use them but seldom. Animals are in the third and last stage of transformation; minerals can become plants, and plants animals, but the animal changes into nothing more subtle than itself. . . .

"When the philosophers had examined all the divisions of the living kingdoms they found that amongst substances which divided into four elements visible to the eye, nothing was in accord with the art of alchemy except the 'stone,' and that was in the animal kingdom.

"I have shown you the nature of this 'stone' and taught you the species of it. Now I will explain the methods of using it. . . . Take the noble stone, place it in a retort or alembic, separate its four elements, which are water, air, earth, and fire; *id est*, body, spirit, soul, and colour. . . . Wash the precipitate from them in the heat of the fire until its blackness and coarseness disappear. Take the prime also of the elements which have been sublimated, wash and sublimate them repeatedly until they become refined, attenuated, and pure. When you have done that, Allah has opened the door for you and you may begin to compound. . . ." Here ends the discourse of Ibn Mashrún. . . .

You will have seen how the adepts twist all their words in the "art" towards the cryptic and the enigmatical, which can by no means be understood or comprehended. This is proof that alchemy is not a natural art. The belief that must be held with regard to alchemy—a belief that is true and based on fact—is that it belongs to the species of psychical and spiritual influences, and that its employment in the

world of nature relegates it to the category of miracles, if the spirits are benevolent, or to the category of witchcraft if they are evil and perverse.

The miraculous is easily discernible. As for witchcraft, it was ascertained about the magician, in the passage where investigation was made of him, that he transforms material essences by means of a magical power that he possesses, and that, according to the adepts, he can never be without a subject upon which to exercise his magical powers. Thus he can create certain animals out of the materials of the earth, or out of hair, or out of plants; in short, he can create them out of materials other than those especially appointed for them. This is what Pharaoh's magicians did with their ropes and their staves, and it is this, they say, of which consists the magic of the Negroes and the Indians living in the farthest limits of the South, and of the Turk in the farthest limits of the North. It is reported that they can enchant the skies to send rain, and so forth. Now since alchemy is the creation of gold out of materials not especially appointed for the purpose, it must be accounted magic, and those most distinguished philosophers who have dealt with the subject, such as Jábir, Maslama, and other philosophers of their high standing from amongst various peoples, have regarded it only from that point of view. For that reason their discourses concerning it have been obscured by enigmatic phrases, by way of precaution—since all religions have reprobated magic and everything connected with it—and their reason for introducing the obscurities was not that of reserving the art for the adepts in it, as is the opinion of people who have not investigated the matter. . . .

I will expose further in another place the error of those who say that the results of this art are attained by natural means. "And Allah is he that knows and is informed of all."

CHINA

Introductory Note

IN ENDEAVOURING to estimate the importance of Chinese literature it is necessary to remember that it is one of the most massive of the literatures of the world and that nearly half of the inhabitants of the world come under its influence. For the particular purpose of the present collection Chinese literature is extremely important since it abounds in the wisdom-writing from which the essay takes its origin. In the writings of Confucius and of Mencius we see the results of the musings and observations of the sages crystallized into brief sentences which were to form the basis of the life and writings of succeeding generations. Later writers, nurtured upon these maxims, let their eyes rest where they would and wrote in leisurely fashion on what they saw and felt. One tells of his garden, another of his inkstand, and yet another of an old battlefield—whatever the subject, they produced essays of the truest type, and the literature of China provides abundant examples of the development from the hard kernel of thought which is expressed in the maxim to the graceful inconsequence of writers like Hsü Hsieh and Yüan Mei.

* * *

CONFUCIUS

CONFUCIUS, which is the Latin form of K'ung Fu-Tzu, was born in 551 B. C. He has been termed the founder of Chinese literature. In his native state he held several offices, finally becoming chief Minister of Justice. Owing to the machinations of a neighbouring prince he was driven to resign and went into exile. He used his leisure for the purpose of compiling and editing the books which now form the Classics of China. Before his death in 479 B. C. he was able to return to his home. For most of what we know about Confucius we are indebted to the *Lun Yü* or Analects. This work consists of twenty short chapters giving the opinions of Confucius on all manner of subjects as far as possible in the words of the Master himself.

The following selections are taken from Professor H. A. Giles's *Gems of Chinese Literature* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.

MAXIMS

THE Master said:

A plausible tongue and a fascinating expression are seldom associated with true virtue.

A youth should be filial at home, respectful abroad. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, but cultivate the friendship of the good. Then, whatsoever of energy may be left to him he should devote to the improvement of his mind.

Let loyalty and truth be paramount with you. Have no friends not equal to yourself. If you have faults, shrink not from correcting them.

Learning without thought is labour lost. Thought without learning is intellectual death.

The study of the supernatural is injurious indeed.

You! shall I teach you in what true knowledge consists? To know what you do know, and to know what you do not know—that is true knowledge.

A man without truthfulness!—I know not how that can be.

In mourning, it is better to be sincere than to be punctilious.

He who offends against God has none to whom he can pray.

Riches and honours are what men desire; yet except in accordance with right these should not be enjoyed. Poverty and degradation are what men dread; yet except in accordance with right these should not be avoided.

The faults of men are characteristic of themselves. By observing a man's faults you may infer what his virtues are.

If a man hear the Truth in the morning, he may die in the evening without regret.

Chi Wên thought thrice and then acted. The Master said, Twice will do.

Man is born to be upright. If he be not so, and yet live, he is lucky to have escaped.

Those who know the Truth are not equal to those who love it; nor those who love it to those who delight in it.

A disciple having asked for a definition of charity, the Master said LOVE ONE ANOTHER! Having further asked for a definition of knowledge, the Master said, KNOW ONE ANOTHER! The Master said—

Rare are they who prefer virtue to the pleasures of sex.

The commander-in-chief of an army may be carried captive, but the convictions even of the meanest man cannot be taken from him.

A disciple having inquired about serving the spirits of the dead, the

Master said, You are not even able to serve living men. How then should you serve spirits? Having further inquired about death, the Master said, You do not even understand life. How then should you understand death? The Master said ——

In hearing litigations, I am like anyone else. I differ, in wishing to prevent these litigations.

Some one asked Confucius, saying, Master, what think you concerning the principle that good should be returned for evil? The Master replied, What then will you return for good? No: RETURN GOOD FOR GOOD; FOR EVIL, JUSTICE.

A disciple having asked for a rule of life in a word, the Master said, Is not *Reciprocity* that word? WHAT YOU WOULD NOT OTHERS SHOULD DO UNTO YOU, DO NOT UNTO THEM!

When his stable was burnt down, Confucius left the Court and said, "Has any man been hurt?" He did not ask about the horses.

A feudal noble said to Confucius, "The villagers of my State are upright men. If a father steals a sheep, his son will give evidence against him." Confucius replied, "The uprightness of the villagers in my State is different from that. A father will shield his son, and a son will shield his father. This is what I call uprightness."

* * *

SUN TZŬ

Sun Tzŭ, who lived in the sixth century B. C., had written the military treatise from which the present chapters are taken and so had attracted the attention of Ho Lu, King of Wu. This monarch expressed a wish to see how far Sun Tzŭ's theory could be translated into practice and for this purpose had 180 ladies brought from the palace so that Sun Tzŭ might drill them. At the first word of command the improvised soldiers laughed uproariously, so Sun Tzŭ patiently repeated his order. At this, however, the laughter only grew louder. Consequently Sun Tzŭ ordered the leaders of the two companies to be beheaded. After this all orders were obeyed instantly and Sun Tzŭ demonstrated his power to put into practice those principles which he had set forth so ably in writing.

The following passages are taken from Mr. Lionel Giles's translation of *The Art of War* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Luzac and Co.

I. LAYING PLANS

SUN TZŬ said: The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field.

These are: (1) The Moral Law; (2) Heaven; (3) Earth; (4) The Commander; (5) Method and discipline.

The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.

Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.

The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness.

By *Method and discipline* are to be understood the marshalling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the gradations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.

These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this wise:

(1) Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral Law?

(2) Which of the two generals has most ability?

(3) With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth?

(4) On which side is discipline most rigorously enforced?

(5) Which army is the stronger?

(6) On which side are officers and men more highly trained?

(7) In which army is there the greater constancy both in reward and punishment?

By means of these seven considerations I can forecast victory or defeat.

The general that hearkens to my counsel and acts upon it, will conquer:—let such a one be retained in command! The general that hearkens not to my counsel nor acts upon it, will suffer defeat:—let such a one be dismissed!

While heeding the profit of my counsel, avail yourself also of any helpful circumstances over and beyond the ordinary rules.

According as circumstances are favourable, one should modify one's plans.

All warfare is based on deception.

Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him.

If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him.

If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.

If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them.

Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand.

Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought.

The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.

II. WAGING WAR

SUN TZU said: In the operations of war, where there are in the field a thousand swift chariots, as many heavy chariots, and a hundred thousand mail-clad soldiers, with provisions enough to carry them a thousand *li,* the expenditure at home and at the front, including entertainment of guests, small items such as glue and paint, and sums spent on chariots and armour, will reach the total of a thousand ounces of silver per day. Such is the cost of raising an army of 100,000 men.

When you engage in actual fighting, if victory is long in coming, the men's weapons will grow dull and their ardour will be damped. If you lay siege to a town, you will exhaust your strength.

Again, if the campaign is protracted, the resources of the State will not be equal to the strain.

Now, when your weapons are dulled, your armour damped, your strength exhausted, and your treasure spent, other chieftains will spring up to take advantage of your extremity. Then no man, however wise, will be able to avert the consequences that must ensue.

Thus, though we have heard of stupid haste in war, cleverness has never been seen associated with long delays.

There is no instance of a country having benefited from prolonged warfare.

It is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the evils of war that can thoroughly understand the profitable way of carrying it on.

The skilful soldier does not raise a second levy, neither are his supply-waggons loaded more than twice.

Bring war material with you from home, but forage on the enemy. Thus the army will have food enough for its needs.

Poverty of the State exchequer causes an army to be maintained by contributions from a distance. Contributing to maintain an army at a distance causes the people to be impoverished.

On the other hand, the proximity of an army causes prices to go up; and high prices cause the people's substance to be drained away.

When their substance is drained away, the peasantry will be afflicted by heavy exactions.

With this loss of substance and exhaustion of strength, the homes of the people will be stripped bare, and three-tenths of their incomes will be dissipated; while Government expenses for broken chariots, worn-out horses, breast-plates and helmets, bows and arrows, spears and shields, protective mantlets, draught-oxen and heavy waggons, will amount to four-tenths of its total revenue.

Hence a wise general makes a point of foraging on the enemy. One cartload of the enemy's provisions is equivalent to twenty of one's own, and likewise a single *picul* of his provender is equivalent to twenty from one's own store.

Now in order to kill the enemy, our men must be roused to anger; that there may be advantage from defeating the enemy, they must have their rewards.

Therefore in chariot fighting, when ten or more chariots have been taken, those should be rewarded who took the first. Our own flags should be substituted for those of the enemy, and the chariots mingled and used in conjunction with ours. The captured soldiers should be kindly treated and kept.

This is called, using the conquered foe to augment one's own strength.

In war, then, let your great object be victory, not lengthy campaigns.

Thus it may be known that the leader of armies is the arbiter of the people's fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril.

* * *

T'AO YÜAN-MING

This writer, who was born in A. D. 365, received an appointment as a magistrate which he held for eighty-three days only. He relinquished it because he said that the five pecks of rice a day, which formed the regular emolument, did not recompense him for having "to crook the hinges of his knee" when receiving a superior officer. So he

retired to his garden and devoted himself to the care of his chrysanthemums until his death in the year 427.

The following essay is looked upon as one of the finest in the language. This translation is taken from Professor H. A. Giles's *Gems of Chinese Literature*, by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.

HOME AGAIN!

HOMEWARDS I bend my steps. My fields, my gardens, are choked with weeds: should I not go? My soul has led a bondsman's life: why should I remain to pine? But I will waste no grief upon the past: I will devote my energies to the future. I have not wandered far astray. I feel that I am on the right track once again.

Lightly, lightly, speeds my boat along, my garments fluttering to the gentle breeze. I inquire my route as I go. I grudge the slowness of the dawning day. From afar I descry my old home, and joyfully press onwards in my haste. The servants rush forth to meet me: my children cluster at the gate. The place is a wilderness; but there is the old pine-tree and my chrysanthemums. I take the little ones by the hand, and pass in. Wine is brought in full bottles, and I pour out in brimming cups. I gaze out at my favourite branches. I loll against the window in my new-found freedom. I look at the sweet children on my knee.

And now I take my pleasure in my garden. There is a gate, but it is rarely opened. I lean on my staff as I wander about or sit down to rest. I raise my head and contemplate the lovely scene. Clouds rise, unwilling, from the bottom of the hills: the weary bird seeks its nest again. Shadows vanish, but still I linger round my lonely pine. Home once more! I'll have no friendships to distract me hence. The times are out of joint for me; and what have I to seek from men? In the pure enjoyment of the family circle I will pass my days, cheering my idle hours with lute and book. My husbandmen will tell me when spring-time is nigh, and when there will be work in the furrowed fields. Thither I shall repair by cart or by boat, through the deep gorge, over the dizzy cliff, trees bursting merrily into leaf, the streamlet swelling from its tiny source. Glad is this renewal of life in due season: but for me, I rejoice that my journey is over. Ah! how short a time it is that we are here! Why then not set our hearts at rest, ceasing to trouble whether we remain or go? What boots it to wear out the soul with anxious thoughts? I want not wealth: I want not power: heaven is beyond my hopes. Then let me stroll through the bright hours as they pass, in my garden, among my flowers; or I will mount the hill and sing my song, or weave my verse beside the limpid brook. Thus

will I work out my allotted span, content with the appointments of Fate, my spirit free from care.

* * *

SU TUNG P'O

Su Tung P'o, who lived from 1036 to 1101, was, more than any other single writer, responsible for moulding the Chinese language and bringing it to perfection as a medium for expressing with beautiful lucidity the full range of thought. After an unusually brilliant academic career he rose to high office in the state, and like most successful men he made enemies, who contrived his banishment to the island of Hainan. His poems and essays are still held in high esteem.

The following translation is taken from Professor H. A. Giles's *Gems of Chinese Literature* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.

THE TOWER OF CONTENTMENT

ALL things are in some sense worth seeing, and are consequently sources of pleasure: it is not necessary that they should possess either rarity or beauty. Eating grains and swilling lees will make a man drunk: berries and herbs will fill his belly; and it is by parity of reasoning that I am able to enjoy myself wherever I go.

Now those who seek happiness and avoid misery, rejoice or grieve according as they are successful or otherwise. But man's desires are endless, while his means of gratifying them are limited: good and evil strive together for the upper hand, and choice between them is ofttimes a difficult task. It follows therefore that occasions of joy are few, and occasions of grief many. Rather might we say that men pursue misery and eschew happiness. This, however, is contrary to human nature. *Men do so only because they are the slaves of objective existences.* Thus, if existences are considered subjectively (as regards themselves), all idea of their dimension is lost; whereas, if they are considered objectively (as regards ourselves), then there are none to which the idea of dimension does not apply. But when another would refer to me his perceptions of such dimensions then I become troubled in mind, as though I saw a battle through a chink and was asked to decide with which party the victory lay. And thus it is, alas! that good and evil grow up promiscuously, and sorrow and joy are intertwined together.

On my transfer from Chekiang to Shantung, I exchanged the comfort of boats for the fatigue of horses and carts. I relinquished the elegance of carved panels for a home among the citron groves of the

north. I turned my back upon hill and lake to wander over acres of mulberry and hemp. When I reached my post, the year's crops had failed, the country round was alive with banditti, and litigation the order of the day. I accordingly adopted a diet of lenten fare, living on berries and herbs; from which it was generally inferred that I was unhappy. But ere a year had passed away, my face filled out, and hair which had grown white became black again. I learned to love the honest manliness of the people, and my own easy disposition won popularity for my administration. I set to work upon my garden and my house, hewing down trees to effect the necessary repairs. On the north, abutting on the city wall, there was an old tower, which had stood there for years. This I to some extent restored; and thither I would often go and give vent to my feelings over the scene below. Southwards, hills receding, hills looming darkly into view, the home perhaps of some virtuous recluse. Eastwards, hills: the hill to which Lü Ao retired to hide. Westwards, the Mu-ling pass in the far distance, like the battlements of a city, hallowed by the memory of many a glorious name. Northwards, the river Wei below; and looking down I would sigh as I remembered him of Huai-yin and his unaccomplished work.

My tower was lofty but solid; and even from its summit a clear view was obtainable. Cool in summer, it was warm in winter; and on mornings of rain or snow, on windy or moonlit nights, I would be there, always accompanied by friends. Vegetables from the garden, fish from the pool, the small wine of the country, and a dish of millet porridge,—such was our simple fare, over which I would exclaim, "Ho, there! what happiness is this!"

A brother, who lived in Chi-nan, hearing how I passed my time, wrote me some verses on the subject, and named my tower the *Tower of Contentment,* in reference to my knack of enjoying myself under all conditions. This, because I could roam beyond the limits of an external world.

* * *

HSÜ HSIEH

Of the following essay one commentator has said that "it is completed with the breath of a yawn (with a single effort), and is like a heavenly robe, without seam." Of the author we know little save that he became Senior Classic in 1601 and was appointed to the Han-lin College. His brief life was devoted to study and his chief ambition was the attainment of a fine literary style.

The following translation is taken from Professor H. A. Giles's *Gems of Chinese Literature* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.

ANTIQUES

FOR some years I had possessed an old inkstand, left at my house by a friend. It came into ordinary use as such, I being unaware that it was an antique. However, one day a connoisseur told me it was at least a thousand years old, and urged me to preserve it carefully as a valuable relic. This I did, but never took any further trouble to ascertain whether such was actually the case or not. For supposing that this inkstand really dated from the period assigned, its then owner must have regarded it simply as an inkstand. He could not have known that it was destined to survive the wreck of time and come to be cherished as an antique. And while we prize it now, because it has descended to us from a distant past, we forget that then, when antiques were relics of a still earlier period, it could not have been of any value to antiquarians, themselves the moderns of what is antiquity to us!

The surging crowd around us thinks of naught but the acquisition of wealth and material enjoyment, occupied only with the struggle for place and power. Men lift their skirts and hurry through the mire; they suffer indignity and feel no sense of shame. And if from out this mass there arises one spirit purer and simpler than the rest, striving to tread a nobler path than they, and amusing his leisure, for his own gratification, with guitars, and books, and pictures, and other relics of olden times—such a man is indeed a genuine lover of the antique. He can never be one of the common herd, though the common herd always affect to admire whatever is admittedly admirable. In the same way, persons who aim at advancement in their career, will spare no endeavour to collect the choicest rarities, in order, by such gifts, to curry favour with their superiors; who, in their turn, will take pleasure in ostentatious display of their collection of antiquities. Such is but a specious hankering after antiques, arising simply from a desire to eclipse one's neighbours. Such men are not genuine lovers of the antique. Their tastes are those of the common herd after all, though they make a great show and filch the reputation of true antiquarians, in the hope of thus distinguishing themselves from their fellows, ignorant as they are that what they secure is the name alone without the reality. The man whom I call a genuine antiquarian is he who studies the writings of the ancients, and strives to form himself upon their model though unable to greet them in the flesh; who ever and anon, in his wanderings up and down the long avenue of the past, lights upon some choice fragment which brings him in an instant face to face with the immortal dead. Of such enjoyment there is no satiety. Those who truly love antiquity, love

not the things, but the men of old; since a relic in the present is much what it was in the past,—a mere thing. And so if it is not to things, but rather to men, that devotion is due, then even I may aspire to be some day an antique. Who shall say that centuries hence an antiquarian of the day may not look up to me as I have looked up to my predecessors? Should I then neglect myself, and foolishly devote my energies to trifling with things?

Such is popular enthusiasm in these matters. It is shadow without substance. But the theme is endless, and I shall therefore content myself with this passing record of my old inkstand.

* * *

YÜAN MEI

THE most popular writer in modern Chinese literature, Yüan Mei was a poet, an essayist, and letter-writer. He is also remembered as the author of a famous cookery book and has been termed "the Brillat-Savarin of China." He was born in 1715, became a magistrate, and, like so many others of his kind, quarrelled with his superiors. At Nanking he had a lovely garden to which he retired and spent his leisure in literary pursuits. He died in 1797.

This translation is taken from Professor H. A. Giles's *Gems of Chinese Literature* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Kelly and Walsh, Ltd.

THE ART OF DINING

EVERYTHING has its own original constitution, just as each man has certain natural characteristics. If a man's natural abilities are of a lower order, Confucius and Mencius themselves would teach him to no purpose. And if an article of food is in itself bad, the greatest *chef* of all ages could not cook a flavour into it.

A ham is a ham; but in point of goodness two hams will be as widely separated as sea and sky. A mackerel is a mackerel; but in point of excellence two mackerel will differ as much as ice and live coals. And other things in the same way. So that the credit of a good dinner should be divided between the cook and the steward,—forty per cent to the steward, and sixty per cent to the cook. Cookery is like matrimony. Two things served together should match. Clear should go with clear, thick with thick, hard with hard, and soft with soft. I have known people to mix grated lobster with birds'-nest, and mint with chicken or pork! The cooks of to-day think nothing of mixing in one soup the meat of chicken, duck, pig, and goose. But these chickens, ducks, pigs, and geese, have doubtless souls; and these

souls will most certainly file plaints in the next world as to the way they have been treated in this.

Let salt food come first, and afterwards food of a more negative flavour. Let the heavy precede the light. Let dry dishes precede those with gravy. No flavour should dominate. If a guest eats his fill of savouries, his stomach will be fatigued. Salt flavours must be relieved by bitter or hot-tasting foods, in order to restore the palate. Too much wine will make the stomach dull. Sour or sweet food will be required to rouse it again into vigour. In winter we should eat beef and mutton; in summer dried and preserved meats. As for condiments, mustard belongs specially to summer; pepper to winter.

Don't eat with your ears! By this I mean do not aim at having extraordinary out-of-the-way foods, just to astonish your guests. For that is to eat with the ears, not with the mouth. Bean-curd, if good, is actually nicer than birds'-nest. And better than sea-slugs (*bêche-de-mer*), if not first-rate, is a dish of bamboo shoots. The chicken, the pig, the fish, the duck,—these are the four heroes of the table. Sea-slugs and birds'-nest have no characteristic flavours of their own. They are but usurpers in the house. I once dined with a friend who gave us birds'-nest in bowls more like vats, holding each about four ounces of the plain-boiled article. The other guests applauded vigorously, but I smiled and said, "I came here to eat birds'-nest, not to take delivery of it wholesale."

Don't eat with your eyes! By this I mean do not cover the table with innumerable dishes and multiply courses indefinitely. For this is to eat with the eyes, not with the mouth.

To know right from wrong, a man must be sober. And only a sober man can distinguish good flavours from bad. It has been well said that words are inadequate to describe the various shades of taste. How much less then must a stuttering sot be able to appreciate them!

To make good tea, the water must be poured on at the moment of boiling. If allowed to go on boiling, the water will lose its flavour. If the water is allowed to go off the boil, the tea-leaves will float.

I am not much of a wine-drinker, but this makes me all the more particular. Wine is like scholarship. It ripens with age, and it is best from a fresh-opened jar. "The top of the wine-jar, the bottom of the tea-pot," as the saying has it.

* * *

LI SHU-CH'ANG

THIS writer was secretary to the first Chinese ambassador in London. The following piquant description of Brighton as seen through Chinese eyes in 1877 comes from the eleventh section of the "Small Square Cup" geographical miscellany.

The essay has been translated by Mr. Arthur Waley and is printed here by his permission.

PU-LAI-TUN

PUL-LAI-TUN is a place famous for its beauty. It is in Europe, on the coast of the land of Ying. It lies about 160 leagues south of Lun-tun and can be reached by coach in two hours. The people of the Capital go there for sport or repose. Landwards, a ridge of low hills girds the town, while towards the sea is a steep and rocky cliff that men of taste have hollowed out into a vast chamber, where rare and marvellous fish from every quarter of the world are kept in tanks of glass through which perpetual waters flow. There is, indeed, no ocean-creature that cannot here be viewed.

Here too is a bridge, set upon wooden piers, that goes out several thousand feet into the sea, so built that wanderers, climbing to a height, may lean and gaze afar; and at the end of the bridge there is a music-room.

For the rest, there is short grass along the downs, flat sands along the shore, green windows and gay roofs in the town, and in company with these the sea, a mighty vision, now dark, now dazzling, stretches for ever and ever its vast expanse of grey.

The people of the Capital in their hundreds of thousands live close-packed as the teeth of a comb; their streets and markets intersect, covering each day a huger space, and where there should be a view of dancing waters, only the sails and masts of merchant-ships are seen. Even the lively clatter of hand-weavers and craftsmen is lacking, and all is merged in dusty squalor.

It is then for the quietness and cleanness of this place that each year, when the Hall of Meeting is closed, holiday-makers with one accord come hither to take their rest. Its winds are mild; its weather, clear. At its horizon sky and ocean meet. The fine ladies of the land go walking happily, sleeve to sleeve, in coats and skirts of diverse cut, trailing by like clouds. Sometimes a boat or two will pass, dipping its small oars into the empty darkness of the sea. The rich and powerful drive by in spotless coaches, their fiery horses racing neck to neck, to distant picnics and carousals.

Dusk thickens, the lamps are lit, a row of flames darts up along the shore. The music, played above the waters, is caught up and cast back again by wind and tide, faltering in wafts of dim, mysterious sound, as though it floated from another world.

A month after I reached Lun-tun a well-to-do gentleman named A-shih-pe-li (Ashberry) brought me to the place and I was quick to admire its matchless beauty. Afterwards I returned many times, and

each time with equal delight. Since then, years have passed and I have visited famous places in many lands; but never on any day has Pu-lai-tun been absent from my thoughts, such power does this place hold over the affections of all who have beheld it.

The Land of Ying is famous chiefly for her giant strength and vast prosperity, and men have judged her only by the toughness of her ships, the hugeness of her cannons, by her swift progress in the race for gain, and they know that by these she has got her will between the Four Seas. But such people do not know that for sport and recreation, for ease and comfort she has such places as this pleasant town.

In ancient days the philosopher Hsün Tzŭ spoke of the evils which come when lands think only of strength and security. But Luan Chēn, when he appeared before the Baron of Ch'u, spoke first of the right ordering of the multitude and next in praise of leisure. It seems, however, it is strength and security which breed good order and leisure, and by the possession of a Pu-lai-tun a country's might may well be judged.

JAPAN

Introductory Note

THE early literature of Japan owes so much to that of its near neighbour, China, that one is inclined to overlook the distinctive note which it possesses. A series of songs and certain prayers to the gods of the Shinto religion are the earliest bits of definite Japanese literature which survive. There was, too, a band of men, something akin to the bards, scalds, and minstrels of Europe, whose duty it was to recite legends and folk-tales before the Mikado on state occasions. What, however, is of more interest to us in the present connexion is the fact that in the literature of the Heian or classical period (A.D. 800-1186) the essay takes a prominent place. The Japanese had a special name for work of this kind: they called it "Zuihitsu," which means "following the pen"—a description which is more illuminating than many of a more ambitious sort. The more elaborate works were composed in Chinese, but in "following the pen" the Japanese were also following their natural bent and they produced some very apt and characteristic work. Another significant and surprising fact is the large share taken by women in Japanese literature at this period. In this respect Japan is alone among the nations of the East. The *Makura Zōshi*, or *Pillow Sketches* were written by a lady of high rank more than nine hundred years ago. A noteworthy feature of this book is to be found in the informing and entertaining enumerations which are to be found there—lists of things dreary, of things detestable, of things thrilling, of things regrettable, and of things cheerful. Here we have the raw material of essays which finds its counterpart in the *pensées*, maxims, or proverbs of other literatures, and it is not surprising to find that it set a vogue for works that correspond more or less closely to the essay as we understand it. Kenkō, the Buddhist monk, tells us that to while away dreary hours he sat down with his ink-slab beside him and jotted down all manner of trifles as they occurred to him, which shows that he had the real essayist's feeling. Much later, in the eighteenth century, we find the writers Jisho and Kiseki inaugurating the "type" series in their *Oyaji Katagi* or "Types of Elderly Men." Here we have a number of sketches approximating to what we know in English as "characters," and once more a definite fashion was set, this book being followed by several others in the same manner.

* * *

KI NO TSURAYUKI

In A.D. 905 the Mikado Daigo gave instructions that a collection should be made of the choicest poems which had been produced during the previous 150 years. This task was entrusted to a committee of officials of the Department of Japanese Poetry, and prominent among these was the poet Ki no Tsurayuki. Their anthology, known as the *Kokinshiu* or "Poems Ancient and Modern," was finished in 922. Ki no Tsurayuki, himself descended from one of the Mikados, held several important offices of state. The famous preface which is here given has always had a great reputation in Japan for elegance of style and it has since been imitated in numerous essays of a similar nature. Ki no Tsurayuki died in 946.

The translation given is from *Primitive and Medieval Japanese Texts* by F. V. Dickins and is here reprinted by permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

JAPANESE POETRY

OUR native poetry springs from the heart of man as its seed, producing the countless leaves of language. Multitudinous are the affairs of men in this world, what their minds think, what their eyes see, what their ears hear they must find words to express. Listening to the nightingale singing amid the blossoms of Spring, or to the murmur of frogs among the marshes in Autumn, we know that every living thing that liveth hath its part in the mingled music of Nature. Our poetry, with effortless ease, moveth heaven and earth, draweth sympathy from invisible demons and deities, softens the relations between men and women, and refresheth the heart of the warrior; from the time of the manifestation of heaven and earth it hath its origin, but its transmission to our day began in relation to sunbright heaven with the work of Shitateruhime and in relation to the earth, mother of metals, with that of Susanowo no Mikoto.

Thus the heart of man came to find expression in the various modes of speech for its joy in the beauty of flowers, its wonder at the song of birds, its tender welcome of the spring mists, its mournful sympathy with the evanescence of the morning dew. As step by step from the first movement of the foot, distant journeys are achieved in the course of time, as grain by grain high mountains are piled up from the mere dust at their base until their peaks are lost in the drifting clouds of heaven, so hath the verse of our land, little by little, become rich and abundant. The quintain opening with the line *Naniha tsu* is the first example of poetry composed by royal command. In the stanza begin-

ning with *Asaka Yama* we have an instance of a maid's banter; these two pieces are the father and mother of our poetry and still guide the earliest steps of the young student of verse.

Now Japanese poetry may be arranged under six categories, just as of Chinese poetry there are six categories. The categories are these:—*sohe,* or satirical or *innuendo* verse; *kazohe,* or descriptive pieces; *nazorahe,* figurative pieces; *tatohe,* allusive songs; *tagadoto,* lyrical poems; and *ihahi,* congratulatory odes.

In these days men are lost in sensuality, their aim is mere decoration, therefore, their verse is vain and trivial. In those circles where luxury only is cultivated, true poetry is as hidden from knowledge as a log of fossil wood buried deep in the ground; in more elegant coteries verse is known, indeed, but is little better than the bloom of the so-called flower-reed that never produceth an ear of grain.

When we remember how poetry arose we see that such ought not to be its condition.

In ancient days the mikadoes themselves, on blossomy spring mornings and moonlit autumn nights, called together their courtiers, and bade them compose verses on various subjects. Some would celebrate their wanderings in difficult places after the blossomy sprays of Spring, others their unguided rambles in the darkness of night to gaze upon the orb of the rising moon of Autumn. These productions the Sovran would himself examine, and determine which were excellent and which were poor.

Nor were such the only themes. The tiny pebble and the vast mass of Tsukuba's hill were used as similes wherewith to honour the Sovran; when the heart was overflowing with the happiness of existence and the pleasure of life, when love of one's fellow-men could be compared with the eternal fumes of Fuji, when the murmur of the cicada recalled sadly the memory of an absent friend, the pines of Takasago and Suminoye, the pleasures of life-long wedded love, Wotoko's hill, the vigour of past manhood, and when in the *ominameshi* flower was seen the symbol of the briefness of the season of girlish bloom, it was in verse they found relief.

Again to verse were they moved when they saw the ground white with snowy showers of fallen cherry blossoms on spring mornings; or heard on autumn evenings the rustle of falling leaves; or year after year gazed upon the mirror's reflection of the doleful ravages of time, shown by grey hairs and wavy wrinkles; or trembled as they watched the passing dewdrop quivering on the beaded grass, or the river's flow flecked with perishing bubbles—symbols of their own fleeting lives; or noted the leaves in all their glory to-day perishing on the morrow, or what one had admired yesterday regarded with indifference to-day.

Then, too, their subjects might be the sound of the waves beating

on the base of the pine-hills, the solitary drawer of water at the fount in mid-moorland, the contemplation of the fall of the *hagi*-leaf in Autumn, the count of the times the woodcock preens his feathers in the red dawn, the comparison of man's existence to a *kure* bamboo-joint floating down a river, the flood of Yóshino as symbol of man's varied fortunes in the world, dismay at tidings of the disappearance of Fuji's fumes or of the mending of Nagara's bridge—in regard to all these subjects the making of verses composed their minds.

Thus from antiquity was poetry cultivated, but it was in the Nara period that the art flourished. Of that age Kakinomoto no Hitómaro was the very prince of poets. Then appeared Yamabe no Akáhito, and of the two it were hard to say which was the greater, which the lesser genius. In addition to these great poets, a number of men of talent distinguished themselves in the succeeding ages; the line was maintained, and did not come to an end.

Long before the present compilation was made, the Anthology known as the *Manyôshiu* appeared. Since that time more than ten reigns, more than a hundred years, have passed. At the present day in City-Royal those who are versed in the learning of antiquity or sympathize with the spirit of its verse are very few—they may be counted by twos and threes. Nevertheless, there exist some poets still; here and there men of merit are to be found, with many who do not get beyond mediocrity.

I cannot, of course, here speak of men of rank and office, but among others who have produced verse some may be mentioned.

There is, first of all, Sôjô Henjo, whose manner is successful, but his work is deficient in truth, like the picture of a beautiful woman, which excites emotion, but to no avail. Then we have Arihara Narihira, very full of feeling but poor in diction; his poetry reminds one of a faded flower that yet preserves some of its perfume. Bunya no Yasuhide, on the other hand, is an artist in words; with him form is better than substance. He is like a pedlar dressed up in fine silks. The priest of Mt. Uji, Kisen, is obscure, and his beginnings and endings do not chime [his verses lead up to no climax]; he is like an autumnal moon, bright at even, dim at dawn.

As to Ononokomachi, she has pathos but lacks power, like a fair but feeble woman. Ohotomo no Kuronushi, lastly, has a pretty turn for verse, but his form is poor; he is like a faggot-bearing boor resting under a blossomy cherry-tree.

Besides the above, many other versifiers are more or less known, the list of their names, indeed, would be as endless as a coil of *kazura* on a moorside; they are as multitudinous as the leaves of a forest of thick-foliaged trees, but they intend poetry rather than accomplish it.

Now in this His Majesty's gracious reign, when already ninefold had become the return of the four seasons, and the waves of His universal

benevolence rippled beyond the Eight Islands, while the protective shadow of His broad and large favour had grown more spacious than that cast by vast Tsukubane's hill, amid the myriad cares of government He, our Sovran, yet found leisure, nor neglected the multitude of matters. Therefore He forgot not antiquity, nor willed that the great past should be clean lost, but desired that the memory thereof should be handed on to future generations. And so it came about that on the eighteenth day of the fourth month of the fifth year of Yengi (May 25, A. D. 905) He charged the Dainaiki,[1] Ki no Tomonori, and the Privy Secretary, Ki no Tsurayuki [with others], to make a selection of ancient poems not contained in the Anthology, with permission to add to these a few of their own composition. Some thousand poems were accordingly arranged in twenty books, to which we have given the title *Kokinwakashiu*—a Garner or Anthology of Japanese Verse, Old and New. Various are the themes dealt with; from the gathering of plum-blossoms in early Spring for chaplets, and the Summer song of the cuckoo; and the plucking of the ruddy sprays of Autumn, to the contemplation of Winter's snow; the crane and the tortoise, as presages of long reign to His Majesty and long life to His subjects; the bush-clover and summer herbs, symbols of spousal love; Afusaka (Ôzaka) hill, where the prayers of travellers to and from the Capital are offered to the god of Támuke; lastly, divers themes not drawn from the four seasons of Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter.

So is our task ended, and an Anthology compiled plentiful as the floods fed by the unfailing waters of the hills, rich in examples as the seashore in grains of sand; may its reception meet with none of the obstructions that bar the stream of Asuka, and the joys it shall afford accumulate, as dust and pebbles gather together to form a high mountain, into a boulder of delight.

Lastly, as to our own style, any charm it may possess is but as the passing perfume of a spring blossom, and to claim for our work the durability of an autumnal night would expose us to criticism as to form, while as to substance we are filled with shame; yet, whether like a drifting cloud we move or rest, whether like a belling stag we stand up or lie down [*i.e.*, always] we rejoice to have been born in an age when such a task as that we have sought to achieve has been imposed upon us by royal command.

Hitomaro has passed away—but shall the poetic art stand still? Things change with change of times, joys and sorrows come and go—but shall not the letter of these poems be preserved? For ever the willows shoot forth their thready branches, the leaves of the pine-tree never fail, the coils of the creepers wander endlessly over the moor-sides, the sea-fowl cease not to imprint their tracts upon the sands of the shore; and for ever, we trust, shall men, taking pleasure in the

[1] Chief Secretary.

form and profiting by the content of these poems, revere the verse of ancient days as the moon in high heaven, and applaud the age which saw the production of this Anthology.

* * *

KENKŌ

THE *Tsure-dzure-gusa*, from which this fragment is taken, is a miscellany of essays, sketches, and stories on every conceivable subject. The writer, after some years spent in the service of the Mikado, became a Buddhist monk, and passed the remainder of his life in seclusion. He died in 1350 at the age of sixty-eight.

The extract was translated by the Rev. C. S. Eby and is reprinted from the *Chrysanthemum*, vol. iii.

OF TWO HOUSES

PLEASANT situation and style of a house along with fitting arrangements are very delightful, although a mere transient abode—a wayside inn. The moon shines bright and lovely everywhere, but more especially so, where a good man dwells in quiet pleasure.

Such a house may not be fashionably built or very elegant. The trees planted around it look so natural, and the wild grass looks as if cultivated with care. Pleasant the bamboo awning and the open fence. Seemly the old fashioned furniture within.

In contrast with this, there is another house, adorned with all the artifices that an architect can devise. On every hand, inside the rooms, arranged with pompous care, rare and costly furniture imported from China, or made by native skill. The trees and grasses are artificially trimmed, despoiled of their native grace. There is neither charm nor pleasure in such a place. Though it is beautiful, one could not live there always; and it may any instant vanish in smoke. A man's character might be guessed from the appearance of his dwelling place.

A rope was stretched over the bedchamber of the great minister Gotoku Daiji's mansion, to drive the osprey away. Saigio, taking notice of this fact, said, "What harm can these ospreys do? We may judge of the mental and moral character of this nobleman by this unkindly sign." And so saying he refused to revisit the mansion. But we cannot always assume the knowledge of a man's character in that way.

I once saw a rope stretched over the mansion of Prince Aya-no Koji, and naturally recalled the instance of Gotoku Daiji. I found no cause for blame, but rather saw that the thing was worthy of the highest praise. The Prince had put the rope there to protect the frogs in his pond from the voracious crows that fed upon them. He acted out of

pure compassion; and that may have been the secret of Gotoku Daiji's action.

* * *

OKAKURA-KAKUZO

This essay was originally written in English but it nevertheless conveys most aptly the Japanese thought and feeling. The author, who was born in 1862 and died in 1913, was a stout defender of the Japanese tradition and steeped in Japanese culture. The old beliefs and customs never failed to find a champion in him and he espoused their cause with a profound learning coupled with a singularly delicate style.

The extract is taken from *The Book of Tea: A Japanese Harmony of Art, Culture, and the Simple Life.*

THE CUP OF HUMANITY

TEA began as a medicine and grew into a beverage. In China, in the eighth century, it entered the realm of poetry as one of the polite amusements. The fifteenth century saw Japan ennoble it into a religion of æstheticism—Teaism. Teaism is a cult founded on the adoration of the beautiful among the sordid facts of everyday existence. It inculcates purity and harmony, the mystery of mutual charity, the romanticism of the social order. It is essentially a worship of the Imperfect, as it is a tender attempt to accomplish something possible in this impossible thing we know as life.

The Philosophy of Tea is not mere æstheticism in the ordinary acceptance of the term, for it expresses conjointly with ethics and religion our whole point of view about man and nature. It is hygiene, for it enforces cleanliness; it is economics, for it shows comfort in simplicity rather than in the complex and costly; it is moral geometry, inasmuch as it defines our sense of proportion to the universe. It represents the true spirit of Eastern democracy by making all its votaries aristocrats in taste.

The long isolation of Japan from the rest of the world, so conducive to introspection, has been highly favourable to the development of Teaism. Our home and habits, costume and cuisine, porcelain, lacquer, painting—our very literature—all have been subject to its influence. No student of Japanese culture could ever ignore its presence. It has permeated the elegance of noble boudoirs and entered the abode of the humble. Our peasants have learned to arrange flowers, our meanest labourer to offer his salutation to the rocks and waters. In our common parlance we speak of the man "with no tea" in him, when he is insusceptible to the serio-comic interests of the personal drama.

Again we stigmatize the untamed æsthete who, regardless of the mundane tragedy, runs riot in the springtide of emancipated emotions, as one "with too much tea" in him.

The outsider may indeed wonder at this seeming much ado about nothing. What a tempest in a tea-cup! he will say. But when we consider how small after all the cup of human enjoyment is, how soon overflowed with tears, how easily drained to the dregs in our quenchless thirst for infinity, we shall not blame ourselves for making so much of the tea-cup. Mankind has done worse. In the worship of Bacchus, we have sacrificed too freely; and we have even transfigured the gory image of Mars. Why not consecrate ourselves to the queen of the Camelias, and revel in the warm stream of sympathy that flows from her altar? In the liquid amber within the ivory-porcelain, the initiated may touch the sweet reticence of Confucius, the piquancy of Laotse, and the ethereal aroma of Sakyamuni himself.

Those who cannot feel the littleness of great things in themselves are apt to overlook the greatness of little things in others. The average Westerner, in his sleek complacency, will see in the tea ceremony but another instance of the thousand and one oddities which constitute the quaintness and childishness of the East to him. He was wont to regard Japan as barbarous while she indulged in the gentle arts of peace: he calls her civilized since she began to commit wholesale slaughter on Manchurian battlefields. Much comment has been given lately to the Code of the Samurai,—the Art of Death which makes our soldiers exult in self-sacrifice; but scarcely any attention has been drawn to Teaism, which represents so much of our Art of Life. Fain would we remain barbarians, if our claim to civilization were to be based on the gruesome glory of war. Fain would we await the time when due respect shall be paid to our art and ideals.

When will the West understand, or try to understand, the East? We Asiatics are often appalled by the curious web of facts and fancies which has been woven concerning us. We are pictured as living on the perfume of the lotus, if not on mice and cockroaches. It is either impotent fanaticism or else abject voluptuousness. Indian spirituality has been derided as ignorance, Chinese sobriety as stupidity, Japanese patriotism as the result of fatalism. It has been said that we are less sensible to pain and wounds on account of the callousness of our nervous organization!

Why not amuse yourselves at our expense? Asia returns the compliment. There would be further food for merriment if you were to know all that we have imagined and written about you. All the glamour of the perspective is there, all the unconscious homage of wonder, all the silent resentment of the new and undefined. You have been loaded with virtues too refined to be envied, and accused of crimes too picturesque to be condemned. Our writers in the past—the

wise men who knew—informed us that you had bushy tails somewhere hidden in your garments, and often dined off a fricassee of new-born babes! Nay, we had something worse against you: we used to think you the most impracticable people on the earth, for you were said to preach what you never practised.

Such misconceptions are fast vanishing amongst us. Commerce has forced the European tongues on many an Eastern port. Asiatic youths are flocking to Western colleges for the equipment of modern education. Our insight does not penetrate your culture deeply, but at least we are willing to learn. Some of my compatriots have adopted too much of your customs and too much of your etiquette, in the delusion that the acquisition of stiff collars and tall silk hats comprised the attainment of your civilization. Pathetic and deplorable as such affectations are, they evince our willingness to approach the West on our knees. Unfortunately the Western attitude is unfavourable to the understanding of the East. The Christian missionary goes to impart, but not to receive. Your information is based on the meagre translations of our immense literature, if not on the unreliable anecdotes of passing travellers. It is rarely that the chivalrous pen of a Lafcadio Hearn or that of the author of *The Web of Indian Life* enlivens the Oriental darkness with the torch of our own sentiments.

Perhaps I betray my own ignorance of the Tea Cult by being so outspoken. Its very spirit of politeness exacts that you say what you are expected to say, and no more. But I am not to be a polite Teaist. So much harm has been done already by the mutual misunderstanding of the New World and the Old, that one need not apologize for contributing his tithe to the furtherance of a better understanding. The beginning of the twentieth century would have been spared the spectacle of sanguinary warfare if Russia had condescended to know Japan better. What dire consequences to humanity lie in the contemptuous ignoring of Eastern problems! European imperialism, which does not disdain to raise the absurd cry of the Yellow Peril, fails to realize that Asia may also awaken to the cruel sense of the White Disaster. You may laugh at us for having "too much tea," but may we not suspect that you of the West have "no tea" in your constitution?

Let us stop the continents from hurling epigrams at each other, and be sadder if not wiser by the mutual gain of half a hemisphere. We have developed along different lines, but there is no reason why one should not supplement the other. You have gained expansion at the cost of restlessness; we have created a harmony which is weak against aggression. Will you believe it?—the East is better off in some respects than the West!

Strangely enough humanity has so far met in the tea-cup. It is the only Asiatic ceremonial which commands universal esteem. The white man has scoffed at our religion and our morals, but he has accepted

the brown beverage without hesitation. The afternoon tea is now an important function in Western society. In the delicate clatter of trays and saucers, in the soft rustle of feminine hospitality, in the common catechism about cream and sugar, we know that the Worship of Tea is established beyond question. The philosophic resignation of the guest to the fate awaiting him in the dubious decoction proclaims that in this single instance the Oriental spirit reigns supreme.

The earliest record of tea in European writing is said to be found in the statements of an Arabian traveller, that after the year 879 the main sources of revenue in Canton were the duties on salt and tea. Marco Polo records the deposition of a Chinese minister of finance in 1285 for his arbitrary augmentation of the tea-taxes. It was at the period of the great discoveries that the European people began to know more about the extreme Orient. At the end of the sixteenth century the Hollanders brought the news that a pleasant drink was made in the East from the leaves of a bush. The travellers Giovanni Batista Ramusio (1559), L. Almeida (1576), Maffeno (1588), Tareira (1610), also mentioned tea.[1] In the last-named year ships of the Dutch East India Company brought the first tea into Europe. It was known in France in 1636, and reached Russia in 1638.[2] England welcomed it in 1650 and spoke of it as "That excellent and by all physicians approved China drink, called by the Chineans Tcha, and by other nations Tay, alias Tee."

Like all the good things of the world, the propaganda of Tea met with opposition. Heretics like Henry Saville (1678) denounced drinking it as a filthy custom. Jonas Hanway (*Essay on Tea,* 1756) said that men seemed to lose their stature and comeliness, women their beauty through the use of tea. Its cost at the start (about fifteen or sixteen shillings a pound) forbade popular consumption, and made it "regalia for high treatments and entertainments, presents being made thereof to princes and grandees." Yet in spite of such drawbacks tea drinking spread with marvellous rapidity. The coffee-houses of London in the early half of the eighteenth century became, in fact, tea-houses, the resort of wits like Addison and Steele, who beguiled themselves over their "dish of tea." The beverage soon became a necessary of life—a taxable matter. We are reminded in this connexion what an important part it plays in modern history. Colonial America resigned herself to oppression until human endurance gave way before the heavy duties laid on Tea. American independence dates from the throwing of tea-chests into Boston harbour.

There is subtle charm in the taste of tea which makes it irresistible and capable of idealization. Western humorists were not slow to mingle the fragrance of their thought with its aroma. It has not the arrogance

[1] Paul Kransel, *Dissertations,* Berlin, 1902.
[2] *Mercurius Politicus,* 1656.

of wine, the self-consciousness of coffee, nor the simpering innocence of cocoa. Already in 1711, says the *Spectator:* "I would therefore in a particular manner recommend these my speculations to all well-regulated families that set apart an hour every morning for tea, bread and butter; and would earnestly advise them for their good to order this paper to be punctually served up and to be looked upon as a part of the tea-equipage." Samuel Johnson draws his own portrait as "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who for twenty years diluted his meals with only the infusion of the fascinating plant; who with tea amused the evening, with tea solaced the midnight, and with tea welcometh the morning."

Charles Lamb, a professed devotee, sounded the true note of Teaism when he wrote that the greatest pleasure he knew was to do a good action by stealth, and to have it found out by accident. For Teaism is the art of concealing beauty that you may discover it, of suggesting what you dare not reveal. It is the noble secret of laughing at yourself, calmly yet thoroughly, and is thus humour itself,—the smile of philosophy. All genuine humorists may in this sense be called tea-philosophers,—Thackeray, for instance, and, of course, Shakespeare. The poets of the Decadence (when was not the world in decadence?), in their protests against materialism, have, to a certain extent, also opened the way to Teaism. Perhaps nowadays it is in our demure contemplation of the Imperfect that the West and the East can meet in mutual consolation.

The Taoists relate that at the great beginning of the No-Beginning, Spirit and Matter met in mortal combat. At last the Yellow Emperor, the Sun of Heaven, triumphed over Shuhyung, the demon of darkness and earth. The Titan, in his death agony, struck his head against the solar vault and shivered the blue dome of Jade into fragments. The stars lost their nests, the moon wandered aimlessly among the wild charms of the night. In despair the Yellow Emperor sought far and wide for the repairer of the Heavens. He had not to search in vain. Out of the Eastern sea rose a queen, the divine Niuka, horn-crowned and dragon-tailed, resplendent in her armour of fire. She welded the fire-coloured rainbow in her magic cauldron and rebuilt the Chinese sky. But it is also told that Niuka forgot to fill two tiny crevices in the blue firmament. Thus began the dualism of love—two souls rolling through space and never at rest until they join together to complete the universe. Every one has to build anew his sky of hope and peace.

The heaven of modern humanity is indeed shattered in the Cyclopean struggle for wealth and power. The world is groping in the shadow of egotism and vulgarity. Knowledge is bought through a bad conscience, benevolence practised for the sake of utility. The East and West, like two dragons tossed in a sea of ferment, in vain strive to regain the jewel of life. We need a Niuka again to repair the grand

devastation; we await the great Avatar. Meanwhile, let us have a sip of tea. The afternoon glow is brightening the bamboos, the fountains are bubbling with delight, the soughing of the pines is heard in our kettle. Let us dream of evanescence, and linger in the beautiful foolishness of things.

* * *

GONNOSKÉ KOMAI

Among modern interpreters of Japan Gonnoské Komai stands unrivalled, and in *Fuji from Hampstead Heath*, from which this essay is taken, we are given a collection of poems, essays, and fantasies which breathe the essential spirit of Japan and show that through all the centuries it has preserved its individuality. The author comes as a discerning visitor to English shores, but he uses his opportunity not to record his impressions of Britain so much as to interpret his own country in the light of the experiences thus gained.

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THE COLOUR OF JAPAN

In Spring the waters fill
The pools and dykes all round;
And Summer hangs her clouds
Upon the strangest peaks.
The Moon in Autumn sheds
Her brightest beams abroad,
While Winter shows one green—
The lone, unfading Pine.

HOW brilliant and translucent is the water all around our Islands. The very pebbles on the shore, as under the waves, appear like precious gems. On lifting our eyes, the richly tinted sky seems to be a priceless brocade woven in sun-shot mist.

As we approach the Land of the Rising Sun, we are welcomed by the marvellous Mount Fuji, dominating land and sea—soft and beautiful if seen from afar but sternly gigantic the closer we approach it.

Rejoicing Hermits climb upon this mighty peak above the clouds,
The sacred Dragons older grow in this deep pool beyond the sky:
The everlasting snow is white as the white silks of her I love;
Smoke drifts along the mountain-side as 'twere her wafted veil,

While peerless Fuji's form recalls her white unfolded fan
Reversed to the rejected Earth from the Far Eastern Sky.

There is much colour of a kind that appeals strongly to us Japanese in the celebrated poem of Ikkyuh on a happy New Year's Day:

Bold Pine and graceful Bamboo join
To grace my Gate this New Year's Day,
And mark a mile upon the Road
To that dim Land where journeys end!
Shall we, dear friends, rejoice or wail?

Taken together, this sombre green of the pine and the gay pale blue-green of the bamboo may be regarded as the distinctive national colour of Japan, and form the common background of every transient outburst of brighter hues.

Crushed to the ground
'Neath the despotic weight
Of the cruel, chill-hearted snow,
The little Bamboo upstands,
Modest but whole and sound:
Now the storm is over;
And Nature smiles again
At the return of the sun:
Where can we find a trace
Of all that bitter snow,
That seemed to threaten destruction
To our slender, modest Bamboo!

Spring follows on the heels of winter, and the Pine-tree and Bamboo, both evergreen symbols, the former of Perseverance and Chastity, the latter of Straightforwardness and Honesty, link the varied pageantry of the Four Seasons together.

Essential as air and water are the pine and bamboo to our every-day life in Japan. Whether growing in forests and thickets, delighting us with dappled shades and the changeful music of their waving branches, or cut down in the service of man, we Japanese cannot live without them. Fortunately, like air and water, the pine-tree and bamboo abound throughout the country. They constitute the invariable materials for building purposes as well as for the manufacture of hundreds of useful objects in our houses. The pine-tree's children is the name we give to a mushroom which grows in the pine forests in the autumn and forms a part of many tasty dishes. In the spring-time the bamboo provides us in its tender yellow roots with a delicious vegetable eaten either alone or with fish or rice.

The pine, the king of our forests, furnishes us with timber and fuel, while the young bamboo gives us the finest and most durable material for covering our wooden clogs and sandals in their bright, glistening

yellow rinds, which turn to a pale yellow when dried. Furthermore, we use the sheaths of the larger bamboo for waterproof paper. From the common chopsticks we use at our tables down to our clogs and sandals, we owe a constant debt of gratitude to our modest but graceful bamboo.

Were you to visit the Isles of Matsusima you would see hundreds of islets picturesquely scattered about in the neighbourhood of Sendai, covered with thousands of well-shaped pine-trees, reflecting on the calm, blue waters beneath. Or go to Maiko-no-Hama, where majestic old pines, with their great weather-beaten roots emerging from the soil, seem to us to be dancing in their joy at the sunshine and the beauty in the midst of which they live. They face the lovely Awajisima Island and its surrounding waters, charmingly decorated with fishing boats and white seagulls. No less delightful is Miyajima, with its thousands of soft-grey stone lanterns reflected in the still, blue waters of the Inland Sea of Japan, which entices the least sensitive to worship the Beauty of Nature. Or go still further afield to see another of the three most celebrated views of our country—"Ama-no-Hasidate"—The Bridge of Heaven, where you will meet with a miracle of Nature in the form of a bridge of living Pine-trees.

As the Plum-Blossom, the emblem of Purity and Elegance, which leads the dance of all the Flowers in Old Japan, begins to smile we rejoice at the advent of Spring. We admire the Plum-tree as she nobly gleams in white and crimson.

Strange to say, in our country we often give the name of Plum-tree to our women . . . Madame or Miss Umé-ko. By the sweet Law of Association the mere mention of the Plum-tree recalls to our Japanese mind the Sweet Nightingale—"Uguisu." One of our poets pictures for us a lovely girl, hiding herself behind her paper-screen and listening to the passionate notes of the bird as it shoots through the branches of the Plum-tree:

I fain would draw my "shohji"
To see the Nightingale:
But fearing to alarm her,
I crouch behind the screen,
Flooded in the ecstasy
Of that o'erflowing passion!

Another poet exclaims:

Oh, glorious Spring!
Each living thing
Breathes Beauty past compare:
Flowers fly, and butterflies,
Like flowers, scent the air:
But which is flower or butterfly,
I vow I can't declare.

It is the happy lot of our beloved and distant Sun-Rise Yamato-Land, which like England "never did nor never shall lie at the proud foot of a conqueror," to be enveloped with the sweetest of blossoms, the embodiment of our national spirit—Yamato-Damasii—once every year.

The Yamato-Damasii

What is the Yamato spirit
That flames 'neath the Eastern Sky?
When asked, let your answer be:
"That spirit you also see
In our fragrant Wild Cherry Bloom,
That smiles in the face of Doom,
And in Beauty is ever ready
For our Land and Mikado to die!"

Go where you will, to the Park of Uyéno or to the Banks of the Sumida, and you will be enchanted by a lavish display of Cherry Blossoms in full bloom.

To enable you to realize the rich magnificence of our noble Plum-tree in full bloom I should have to take you with me to Tsukigase or Hakkei-Yen, where you could bathe your eyes in the lavish beauties of hundreds of them, forming an ocean of vivid colour, rendered still more intoxicating by their all-pervading fragrance!

Of one such scene an ancient poet writes:

For two score miles along the banks
Of winding Tsukigase,
The plum-tree petals' snowy white
Out-glows the lovely vale.
The famous Chinese orchard with
Three hundred trees at Seiko
Is but a faint reminder
Of this ocean of rich bloom!
Days after my departure thence
My flowing sleeves are bathed still
In its delicious odour.

. . . . . .

Everywhere colour! Even music being imagined as voicing its beauty.

So sensitive is the Japanese mind to each phase of the wealth of colour which it has inherited in our lovely land that the following poem may be taken in a literal sense as expressing our embarrassment in presence of our flowers, or metaphorically when thinking of charming ladies:

When Spring scatters Bloom on each tree in the garden
How, how can I choose the one flower for my vase!

Colour—with movement—is also the dominant charm of those inevitable companions of Japanese flowers . . . the capricious tribe of Butterflies who ring all the possible changes of tint, and often outvie all the jewels of the mine with their flashing wings:

Daintily gambolling Butterfly,
Nodding at Bud and flirting with Blossom,
A Flower midst the flowers of my garden you go!
But none of these joy-flattered Flow'rets can know
If you'll perch on her bosom
Or leave her to sigh.

In order to see the Cherry Blossoms one has but to have a run to Yosino where one can view the ravishing sight by the thousand. Indeed, it has been worthily said that the beautiful Nature of our country can even transform the stubbornest of aliens to its own spirit—thus naturalizing them to the very heart's core and beyond all risk of relapse.

Could we but show now
To many a stranger
On alien, dim shores
The Glorious Dawn
Of Kosino's Spring,
With the scented mist
Of our radiant Cherry,
Surely they all would soon be softened
With souls transfused to a Japanese semblance,
Full of craving, devoted passion
For our dear Islands . . .
Our ancient Sun-rise Yamato-Land.

The loveliest view of the spring in all Japan is on the Arasiyama Hill in Kyoto. As we stand on the Togekkyoh-Bridge, with fallen petals of Cherry Blossom floating like butterflies through the perfumed air, we see beneath us rafts swinging down the rapid waters of the blue Katsura, while around us brightly clad village girls from Yasé and Ohara poise above their laughing eyes light loads of the daintiest flowers.

In triumph home-returning
From victory o'er the foe,
His rice-fields welcome our hero
As he sings the sowers' lay.

Just before the rice-planting throughout the length and breadth of our country, where every nook and corner is tilled with the invaluable help of our most obedient, industrious, and willing women, the fields are covered by the golden flowers of the rape fascinatingly contrasted

with the red flowerets of our *Gengé*-soh,[1] spreading a prodigious carpet woven by the skilful hands of Nature over the whole land.

Green grasses and red *Gengé* give place to the rich brown of the soil when those plants are dug in as natural fertilizers for the all-important rice.

If by romantic chance you went astray in our countryside, you might well hope to have the following delightful experience recounted by one of our poets:

I had lost my way in the open field,
Where a lovely girl was gathering
Violets under the smiling sun:
And I asked her to guide me home.
She nodded and pointed the way with her flowers
Towards a spot where two gay butterflies
Leisurely fluttered off in the azure!

When caught by the rain in the fields one is often reminded of an old poem which gives a glimpse of the amiable and nature-loving philosophy of the Japanese:

Check your haste and save your skin,
Strange sojourner at our inn;
The hedge beckons you in vain
Rushing wildly through the rain.
Had you snuggled near the birds,
Listening to their merry words,
Soon the shower had passed away
With promise of a sunny day.

Then comes Wistaria—the dainty *Fuji-no-Hana:*

As we mourn the early faded
Cherry-Bloom and sweet Peach-Blossom,
Comes Wistaria, slender lady,
Softly smiling, white and purple,
To console us for our loss.
Exquisite in grace, yet modest,
What a lesson can she teach us:
Like a lovely lady, lovelier,
In delicious clinging languor,
As she leans on a strong arm,
So Wistaria, when she clings
To a bamboo-stem or pine-tree,
Or trails gracefully along
The half-moon Kameido Bridge,
Mirroring her sweet reflection
In the waters of Tokyo,
Where she fills admiring lovers

[1] *Astragalus sinicus.*

Full of rapture with her beauty,
And e'en draws the shimmering carps there,
Gold and silver, dappled, scarlet,
To do homage to her grace!

It may interest my readers to learn that the word representing colour is also one of the words expressing love in the Japanese language and that we regard love as the colour of our human life. Perhaps this will excuse the introduction of a little characteristic Japanese poem in which both love and colour play their parts with just a touch of jealousy:

My bride at dawn a rosebud plucked
That breathed the morning air,
Then looking in her glass, she placed
That rival in her hair;
And asked me, pouting saucily,
"Which is the lovelier, say?"
But, piqued, I answered jestingly,
"Of course, the Flower of May!"
My lovely bride in anger cried
And crushed the flower's charms,
"Hereafter take, instead of me,
Such rosebuds in your arms!"

Here is another:

Darling, tell me—
I am not jealous —
But I only wish to know
If you really walked alone
Through the rain
With your umbrella,
How it is that your left sleeve
Is quite wet
The while your right one
Is as dry as Summer weather!

Jealousy also has its colour symbol. For us just a touch of it heightens the flavour of affection, but we warn our ladies not to overdo it! They are urged to toast their lovers, like breakfast toast, to a delicate light brown—as we say to a fox colour—and carefully to avoid the darker tints that spoil both breakfast toast and lovers.

The colour of love is also manifest in the following poem:

Far below the ancient Temple
On the bold Arasiyama,
In my distant, loved Japan,
Prodigal in lovely blossoms
Of the world-famed Cherry-trees,
And along the winding banks

Of the roaring Hozu Rapids,
Clings the soft Azalea,
Creeping ever, ever nearer
And revealing her devotion
To her love—the Nightingale—
Unrestrained in crimson tears
That glow flaming o'er the torrent
Thundering through the rocky gorge.

Azalea in white, pink, and crimson is followed in rapid succession by Iris of varied hues—deep purple, striated, and white. Hundreds of thousands of these flowers are to be seen either at Horikiri or Kamata. They form a totally different kind of natural living carpet in our country. Peonies and "Hagi" flowers (*Lespedeza bicolor*) come to delight us in June and July, while after the rice is planted, turning the whole fields of Japan into a Green Carpet, the beautiful Glow-Worms come out to enchant us with their red-capped, pitch-black-coated forms, carrying numberless picturesque phosphorescent lanterns.

O beauteous Glow-Worm!
Thou hast vainly sought
A streamlet's song to soothe thee:
Now thou restest mid the tender grasses
Of this lone, quiet field,
Where the dewy tears of Heaven
For a moment cool thy glowing passion!

Lotus flowers adorn the months of July and August in almost all our ponds and pools. Take the famous "Sinobazu-no-Ike" in Tokyo, where there is a celebrated Shrine of Benten—the Goddess of Beauty—whose eccentric jealousy is widely known in the land; so much so that no two lovers could go together to worship at her altar without risking a great danger of immediate separation. In this respect we at home do not or rather need not bring the case before the Court of Justice in order to get divorce. We simply go and pay our homage to the Goddess and she will quietly arrange the matter for us indirectly or through the usual medium of our kind-hearted parents, brothers, sisters, or friends!

When admiring the unique beauty of the Lotus as they emerge from the peaceful, cool waters of the pond which we frequently pass unheeding until the gorgeous flowers magically bloom before us, under the heat of summer, one can very easily imagine why devoted Indian friends selected this specific flower as the very Emblem of Paradise, with the merciful Buddha sitting in deep meditation upon the lovely petals, and cooled by the breeze through its green leaves.

Ah, the inspiring sight
Of the Lotus Pond in bloom!

How often we passed unheeding
Until suddenly it revealed
All its magic and perfume!

Although in many minds throughout Europe the idea of Japan is ever associated with lovely flowers and capricious butterflies . . . and even with the dainty "Madame Butterfly" or "Madame Chrysanthemum," largely the creation of the Western imagination . . . we should not forget the sterner elements of Nippon's beauty . . . her active volcanoes, which might have given Dante fresh scenes for his *Inferno,* her stormy and perilous seas swept by the destructive typhoons, or her huge inundations. To form a true picture of the environment of our ancient Samurai race these elements of its experience and of its æsthetic feeling must be kept in mind, as also the earthquake drill, imposed upon man, woman, and child in Japan by her harsh Mother-Nature, who thus forces us to live dangerously.

All the beauty of mountain peaks, waterfalls, torrents, rocky coasts, and lacework of scattered islets, with their constant changes of colour, light, and shade, have this permanent dark background of peril, reminding us that all our joys may not any moment be interrupted by sudden and violent death, occasionally on the most gigantic scale. . . . Yet our courageous and perhaps somewhat reckless race enjoys nothing more in summer than to climb the sides of our volcanoes, including the great Aso, whose crater is the largest in the world, for a glimpse into their fiendish jaws, waiting, as it were, in ambush to catch us unawares.

But the beauties of lake and forest are constant attendants upon these formidable and treacherous giants, our mountains. Nothing is more wonderful than the reflection of Fuji-Yama upon the mirror-like surface of Lake Hakone; or the mighty shadow of Futa-ara-Yama thrown upon Lake Chusenji. Speaking of the Lakes of Japan one must not forget to mention the celebrated eight views near Lake Biwa, in the neighbourhood of Kyoto, which cover an area of over 187 miles.

1. Sunset from Seta Bridge.
2. The evening Snow on Mount Hira.
3. The home-bound Sailing Boats at Yahasi.
4. The quiet evening Rain upon the huge Single Pine-tree of Karasaki.
5. The Autumnal Moon at the Isiyama Temple.
6. The returning Wild Geese at Katada,
7. The serene breeze of Awazu, and
8. The Mii Temple with the tolling of its evening Bell.

I have no time to describe the successive beauties of the Lake Biwa or even of these eight celebrated views. I must resort to our poetry, and especially to our seventeen-syllabled Hokku, for a crystallization of these varied beauties so far as humanly possible. One of our ancient

poets, challenged to express the quintessence of these beauties of the whole eight views in seventeen syllables, produced the following:

Hichikei wa kasumi no soto ni Mii no Kané

which means:

O Temple Bell of Mii!
Thy soothing sound
Now hides behind the haze
Those seven lovely views.

NIKKO

Nikko surpasses all other parts of Japan in an unparalleled combination of the beauties of Nature and Art. Its variety is infinite, ranging from mountains and verdure-clad hills to the plain with winding streams and mineral springs, the whole bound together by mountain torrents, waterfalls, and lakes. The beauty of this Paradise is enhanced by marvellous temples and shrines, absolutely unique throughout the East in their prodigal magnificence. When Iyeyasu, the founder of the famous Tokugawa Shogunate, chose the site of the grave of his family in this enchanting region, all the Daimios of Japan poured in as gifts an incomparable array of the finest products of the Art of old Japan when at the zenith of her ancient civilization. This opulence of beauty was further enriched by the choicest objects of Korean Art sent by the tributary kings of that country. One of the Daimios, too poor to rival his fellow-chiefs in their presents, planted an avenue of young cedars for scores of miles along the road leading to the Temple of Nikko . . . hundreds of thousands of them . . . which form now, after the lapse of more than three centuries, the world-renowned Avenue of Cryptomerias that ends at the red-lacquered Sacred Bridge forming the entrance to the Main Temple.

The colour of Japan is concentrated in Nikko. Sacred Arches called "Torii," made either of huge stone or ancient bronze, faced with five-storeyed Pagodas, brilliantly lacquered with all colours, tastefully contrasted with the verdure of pines and cedars which protect the holy precincts of the old Shogunate. Before entering the Temples themselves, to be astounded with the finest combinations of the ancient Art of the Far East, a whole day might be spent in admiring one of the many Gates leading to the Inner Temple. It would require weeks to give an adequate description of all the beauties of Nikko. Suffice it to say here that it furnishes an accumulation of all colours of the East in their inimitable perfection, rendered still more magnificent by the rare products of the rich Eastern Mines!

The effort to describe the indescribable fills me with an overpowering desire to take you all with me to Japan to see those innumerable

beauties with your own eyes, giving me the joy of seeing your delight. I should thus escape my painful sense of failure to impart to you some little of my own admiration. For how should I describe jewels and objects in gold and silver, which vie with the rainbow, all of which form part of that magnificent orchestration of the twin beauties of Nature and Art that swims before the intoxicated eyes of the Japanese on hearing the magic name of Nikko. Indeed, "Half thy beauty was not told unto me!" is inadequate to voice the thrill of surprise and admiration evoked by the Temple of Sunlight. Alas! the most exquisite colours of Nature and Art can only be fully enjoyed through actual contact with our own eyes.

So blessed is our country with a wealth of colours that some of our greatest artists, both of the past and present, seem to despair of doing justice to them and confine themselves always exclusively to black and white. In our dress, too, we leave these rich and bright colours to our babies and girls. The famous Japanese colour-prints of the Ukiyoyé School were, for instance, given to our children as presents from Yedo, now Tokyo. It is only since we opened our shores to foreign trade that the Westerners have taught us to appreciate our own prints. They have succeeded to such an extent that we now send out art-collectors to buy them back from the West at very high prices . . . sometimes from £30 to £100 each for what was originally sold for a few pence.

GREAT BRITAIN

Introductory Note

THE essay, as Mr. John Freeman has noted, came somewhat slowly into English letters, but, once there, it flourished mightily. From the time when Bacon set down observations on men and things in that enigmatic "folded" style of his, writers of miscellaneous prose ranging from the aphorism to the essay proper have never been lacking. Lyric and essay, outwardly so dissimilar, are alike in being pre-eminently expressions of personality, but whereas one embodies rare and exalted moments when passion is at white heat, the other expresses the quieter and more commonplace moods which, after all, make up the bulk of existence. The average Briton blushes guiltily if convicted of a fondness for poetry. He feels that it is something bizarre and impracticable and most decidedly to be hidden from public gaze. Now and again the most commonplace man feels the necessity for just that expression which the poet alone can give to his feelings, but for the most part the quieter manner of the essayist suits him better. As a result the English essay has never languished for want of appreciative readers, and on one or two celebrated occasions its influence has been far-reaching indeed. The common sense of the *Spectator* essays exerted a moderating power in the eighteenth century which was incalculable, and one has only to listen to the level tones of Bacon, Sir Thomas Browne, and Charles Lamb to realize that here is a gentle and humanizing influence that is out of all proportion to the modest limits and small pretensions of the essay itself.

It is true that all have not been equally successful in keeping the *via media* with that good humour which is the essayist's prime qualification. Some, like Carlyle and Macaulay for instance, have been so obsessed with their mission that they have descended to something perilously akin to tub-thumping. There are good judges who would exclude Macaulay from the ranks of the elect on this account, but we have preferred to be catholic and to give him the benefit of the doubt.

In Charles Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and R. L. Stevenson we have, however, a more fruitful line of succession the effects of which are evident in much of the best work of to-day.

* * *

RICHARD DE BURY

This writer, the son of Sir Richard Aungerville, was so named because he was born near Bury St. Edmunds in 1281. He went to Oxford and afterward became tutor to Prince Edward. After that prince's accession Richard de Bury held various offices of state and finally became Bishop of Durham. He died in 1345. He was a great book-lover and was said to have more books than all the other English bishops put together.

In the *Philobiblon*, from which the following passage is taken, he gives his ideas on the subject of book-collecting. He wrote in Latin, and the passage extract here given is from the translation by E. C. Thomas, by permission of Messrs. Chatto and Windus, and Messrs. Kegan Paul, French, Trubner and Co., Ltd.

OF THE LOVE OF BOOKS

IT TRANSCENDS the power of human intellect, however deeply it may have drunk of the Pegasean fount, to develop fully the title of the present chapter. Though one should speak with the tongue of men and angels, though he should become a Mercury or Tully, though he should grow sweet with the milky eloquence of Livy, yet he will plead the stammering of Moses, or with Jeremiah will confess that he is but a boy and cannot speak, or will imitate Echo rebounding from the mountains. For we know that the love of books is the same thing as the love of wisdom. Now this love is called by the Greek word *philosophy*, the whole virtue of which no created intelligence can comprehend; for she is believed to be the mother of all good things: Wisdom vii. She as a heavenly dew extinguishes the heats of fleshly vices, the intense activity of the mental forces relaxing the vigour of the animal forces, and slothfulness being wholly put to flight, which being gone all the bows of Cupid are unstrung.

Hence Plato says in the *Phædo:* The philosopher is manifest in this, that he dissevers the soul from communion with the body. Love, says Jerome, the knowledge of the scriptures, and thou wilt not love the vices of the flesh. The godlike Xenocrates showed this by the firmness of his reason, who was declared by the famous hetæra Phryne to be a statue and not a man, when all her blandishments could not shake his resolve, as Valerius Maximus relates at length. Our own Origen showed this also, who chose rather to be unsexed by the mutilation of himself, than to be made effeminate by the omnipotence of woman—though it was a hasty remedy, repugnant alike to nature and to virtue.

whose place it is not to make men insensible to passion, but to slay with the dagger of reason the passions that spring from instinct.

Again, all who are smitten with the love of books think cheaply of the world and wealth; as Jerome says to Vigilantius: The same man cannot love both gold and books. And thus it has been said in verse:

> No iron-stained hand is fit to handle books,
> Nor he whose heart on gold so gladly looks:
> The same men love not books and money both,
> And books thy herd, O Epicurus, loathe;
> Misers and bookmen make poor company,
> Nor dwell in peace beneath the same roof-tree.

No man, therefore, can serve both books and Mammon.

The hideousness of vice is greatly reprobated in books, so that he who loves to commune with books is led to detest all manner of vice. The demon, who derives his name from knowledge, is most effectually defeated by the knowledge of books, and through books his multitudinous deceits and the endless labyrinths of his guile are laid bare to those who read, lest he be transformed into an angel of light and circumvent the innocent by his wiles. The reverence of God is revealed to us by books, the virtues by which He is worshipped are more expressly manifested, and the rewards are described that are promised by the truth, which deceives not, neither is deceived. The truest likeness of the beatitude to come is the contemplation of the sacred writings, in which we behold in turn the Creator and the creature, and draw from streams of perpetual gladness. Faith is established by the power of books; hope is strengthened by their solace, insomuch that by patience and the consolation of scripture we are in good hope. Charity is not puffed up, but is edified by the knowledge of true learning, and, indeed, it is clearer than light that the Church is established upon the sacred writings.

Books delight us when prosperity smiles upon us; they comfort us inseparably when stormy fortune frowns on us. They lend validity to human compacts, and no serious judgments are propounded without their help. Arts and sciences, all the advantages of which no mind can enumerate, consist in books. How highly must we estimate the wondrous power of books, since through them we survey the utmost bounds of the world and time, and contemplate the things that are as well as those that are not, as it were in the mirror of eternity. In books we climb mountains and scan the deepest gulfs of the abyss; in books we behold the finny tribes that may not exist outside their native waters, distinguish the properties of streams and springs and of various lands; from books we dig out gems and metals and the materials of every kind of mineral, and learn the virtues of herbs and trees and plants, and survey at will the whole progeny of Neptune, Ceres, and Pluto.

But if we please to visit the heavenly inhabitants, Taurus, Caucasus, and Olympus are at hand, from which we pass beyond the realms of Juno and mark out the territories of the seven planets by lines and circles. And finally we traverse the loftiest firmament of all, adorned with signs, degrees, and figures in the utmost variety. There we inspect the antarctic pole, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; we admire the luminous Milky Way and the Zodiac, marvellously and delightfully pictured with celestial animals. Thence by books we pass on to separate substances, that the intellect may greet kindred intelligences, and with the mind's eye may discern the First Cause of all things and the Unmoved Mover of infinite virtue, and may immerse itself in love without end. See how with the aid of books we attain the reward of our beatitude, while we are yet sojourners below.

Why need we say more? Certes, just as we have learnt on the authority of Seneca, leisure without letters is death and the sepulture of the living, so contrariwise we conclude that occupation with letters or books is the life of man.

Again, by means of books we communicate to friends as well as foes what we cannot safely entrust to messengers; since the book is generally allowed access to the chambers of princes, from which the voice of its author would be rigidly excluded, as Tertullian observes at the beginning of his *Apologeticus*. When shut up in prison and in bonds, and utterly deprived of bodily liberty, we use books as ambassadors to our friends, and entrust them with the conduct of our cause, and send them where to go ourselves would incur the penalty of death. By the aid of books we remember things that are past, and even prophesy as to the future; and things present, which shift and flow, we perpetuate by committing them to writing.

The felicitous studiousness and the studious felicity of the all-powerful eunuch, of whom we are told in the Acts, who had been so mightily kindled by the love of the prophetic writings that he ceased not from his reading by reason of his journey, had banished all thought of the populous palace of Queen Candace, and had forgotten even the treasures of which he was the keeper, and had neglected alike his journey and the chariot in which he rode. Love of his book alone had wholly engrossed this domicile of chastity, under whose guidance he soon deserved to enter the gate of faith. O gracious love of books, which by the grace of baptism transformed the child of Gehenna and nursling of Tartarus into a Son of the Kingdom!

Let the feeble pen now cease from the tenor of an infinite task, lest it seem foolishly to undertake what in the beginning it confessed to be impossible to any.

* * *

FRANCIS BACON

Born in London in 1561 Francis Bacon came of a family that had connexions with all the great politicians of his time. He was educated at Cambridge and called to the Bar, where family influence helped him considerably. Nothing short of the highest would do for Bacon and he realized his ambition when, in 1618, he was made Lord Chancellor with the title of Baron Verulam. Later he became Viscount St. Albans. Bacon's success was short-lived. Charges of bribery and corruption were levelled against him and he was fined to the tune of £40,000. This was accompanied by imprisonment in the Tower during the King's pleasure, and permanent exile from office. The remainder of his life he spent in literary pursuits. He died in 1626. The essays illustrate, in an interesting fashion, the development of the form. They are jottings from the note-book of a singularly clear-sighted man of affairs, and each essay is written round maxims and aphorisms which are the result of his own keen observation.

I. OF GARDENS

GOD ALMIGHTY first planted a garden; and indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which buildings and palaces are but gross handiworks; and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it, in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty may be then in season. For December and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter: holly, ivy, bays, Juniper, cypress trees, yew, pineapple trees, fir trees, rosemary, lavender; periwinkle, the white, the purple, and the blue; germander, flags, orange trees, lemon trees, and myrtles, if they be stoved; and sweet marjoram, warm set. There followeth for the latter part of January and February the mezerion tree, which then blossoms; crocus vernus, both the yellow and the gray; primroses, anemones, the early tulip, hyacinthus orientalis, chamairis, frettellaria. For March, there come violets, especially the single blue, which are the earliest; the yellow daffodil, the daisy, the almond tree in blossom, the peach tree in blossom, the cornelian tree in blossom, sweetbrier. In April follow the double white violet, the wallflower, the stock gilliflower, the cowslip, flower-de-luces, and lilies of all natures, rosemary flowers, the tulip, the double peony, the pale daffodil, the French honeysuckle, the cherry tree in blossom, the

damascene and plum trees in blossom, the whitethorn in leaf, the lilac tree. In May and June come pinks of all sorts, especially the blush pink; roses of all kinds, except the musk, which comes later; honeysuckles, strawberries, bugloss, columbine, the French marigold, flos Africanus, cherry tree in fruit, ribes, figs in fruit, rasps, vine flowers, lavender in flowers, the sweet satyrian with the white flower; herba muscaria, lilium convallium, the apple tree in blossom. In July come gilliflowers of all varieties, musk roses, the lime tree in blossom, early pears and plums in fruit, ginnitings, quadlins. In August come plums of all sorts in fruit, pears, apricocks, barberries, filberts, musk melons, monkshoods of all colours. In September come grapes, apples, poppies of all colours, peaches, melocotones, nectarines, cornelians, wardens, quinces. In October and the beginning of November, come services, medlars, bullaces, roses cut or removed to come late, holly oaks, and such like. These particulars are for the climate of London; but my meaning is perceived that you may have *ver perpetuum,* as the place affords.

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air, where it comes and goes like the warbling of music, than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast flowers of their smells; so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness, yea, though it be in a morning's dew. Bays likewise yield no smell as they grow, rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram. That which above all others yields the sweetest smell in the air is the violet, especially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April, and about Bartholomew-tide; next to that is the musk rose; then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell; then the flower of the vines—it is a little dust, like the dust of a bent, which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth; then sweetbrier; then wallflowers, which are very delightful to be set under a parlour, or lower chamber window; then pinks and gilliflowers, especially the matted pink and clove gilliflower; then the flowers of the lime tree; then the honeysuckles, so they be somewhat afar off. Of bean flowers I speak not, because they are field flowers. But those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three, that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water mints; therefore you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread.

For gardens, speaking of those which are indeed princelike, as we have done of buildings, the contents ought not well to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts; a green in the entrance, a heath or desert in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides. And I like well that four acres of ground be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and

four to either side, and twelve to the main garden. The green hath two pleasures: the one, because nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn; the other, because it will give you a fair alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a stately hedge which is to inclose the garden. But because the alley will be long, and in great heat of the year or day, you ought not to buy the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green; therefore you are, of either side the green, to plant a covert alley upon carpenters' work, about twelve foot in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden. As for the making of knots or figures with divers coloured earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side which the garden stands, they be but toys; you may see as good sights many times in tarts. The garden is best to be square, encompassed on all the four sides with a stately arched hedge, the arches to be upon pillars of carpenters' work of some ten foot high and six foot broad, and the spaces between of the same dimension with the breadth of the arch. Over the arches let there be an entire hedge of some four foot high, framed also upon carpenters' work; and upon the upper hedge, over every arch a little turret, with a belly enough to receive a cage of birds; and over every space between the arches, some other little figure, with broad plates of round coloured glass gilt, for the sun to play upon; but this hedge I intend to be raised upon a bank, not steep, but gently slope, of some six foot, set all with flowers. Also I understand that this square of the garden should not be the whole breadth of the ground, but to leave on either side ground enough for diversity of side alleys, unto which the two covert alleys of the green may deliver you; but there must be no alleys with hedges at either end of this great inclosure; not at the hither end for letting your prospect upon this fair hedge from the green; nor at the further end for letting your prospect from the hedge through the arches upon the heath.

For the ordering of the ground within the great hedge, I leave it to variety of device, advising, nevertheless, that whatsoever form you cast it into, first it be not too busy or full of work, wherein I, for my part, do not like images cut out in juniper or other garden stuff; they be for children. Little low hedges round like welts, with some pretty pyramids, I like well, and in some places, fair columns upon frames of carpenters' work. I would also have the alleys spacious and fair. You may have closer alleys upon the side grounds, but none in the main garden. I wish also, in the very middle, a fair mount, with three ascents and alleys, enough for four to walk abreast, which I would have to be perfect circles without any bulwarks or embossments, and the whole mount to be thirty foot high; and some fine banqueting house, with some chimneys neatly cast, and without too much glass.

For fountains, they are a great beauty and refreshment, but pools mar all, and make the garden unwholesome, and full of flies and frogs.

Fountains I intend to be of two natures: the one that sprinkleth or spouteth water, the other a fair receipt of water of some thirty or forty foot square, but without fish, or slime, or mud. For the first, the ornaments of images gilt, or of marble, which are in use do well; but the main matter is so to convey the water as it never stay either in the bowls or in the cistern, that the water be never by rest discoloured green or red, or the like, or gather any mossiness or putrefaction. Besides that, it is to be cleansed every day by the hand; also some steps up to it, and some fine pavement about it doth well. As for the other kind of fountain, which we may call a bathing pool, it may admit much curiosity and beauty, wherewith we will not trouble ourselves; as that the bottom be finely paved, and with images, the sides likewise, and withal embellished with coloured glass, and such things of lustre, encompassed also with fine rails of low statues. But the main point is the same which we mentioned in the former kind of fountain, which is, that the water be in perpetual motion, fed by a water higher than the pool, and delivered into it by fair spouts, and then discharged away under ground by some equality of bores that it stay little. And for fine devices of arching water without spilling, and making it rise in several forms, of feathers, drinking glasses, canopies, and the like, they be pretty things to look on, but nothing to health and sweetness.

For the heath, which was the third part of our plot, I wish it to be framed, as much as may be, to a natural wildness. Trees, I would have none in it, but some thickets made only of sweetbrier and honeysuckle, and some wild vine amongst, and the ground set with violets, strawberries, and primroses; for these are sweet and prosper in the shade; and these to be in the heath here and there, not in any order. I like also little heaps in the nature of molehills, such as are in wild heaths, to be set, some with wild thyme, some with pinks, some with germander, that gives a good flower to the eye, some with periwinkle, some with violets, some with strawberries, some with cowslips, some with daisies, some with red roses, some with lilium convallium, some with Sweet Williams, red, some with bear's-foot, and the like low flowers, being withal sweet and sightly. Part of which heaps to be with standards of little bushes, pricked upon their top, and part without. The standards to be roses, juniper, holly, barberries, but here and there, because of the smell of their blossom, red currants, gooseberries, rosemary, bays, sweetbrier, and such like; but these standards to be kept with cutting that they grow not out of course.

For the side grounds, you are to fill them with variety of alleys, private, to give a full shade, some of them, wheresoever the sun be. You are to frame some of them likewise for shelter, that when the wind blows sharp you may walk as in a gallery. And those alleys must be likewise hedged at both ends to keep out the wind, and these closer alleys must be ever finely gravelled, and no grass, because of going wet.

In many of these alleys likewise you are to set fruit trees of all sorts, as well upon the walls as in ranges. And this would be generally observed, that the borders wherein you plant your fruit trees be fair and large, and low, and not steep; and set with fine flowers, but thin and sparingly, lest they deceive the trees. At the end of both the side grounds I would have a mount of some pretty height, leaving the wall of the inclosure breast high to look abroad into the fields.

For the main garden I do not deny but there should be some fair alleys, ranged on both sides with fruit trees, and some pretty tufts of fruit trees, and arbours with seats set in some decent order; but these to be by no means set too thick, but to leave the main garden so as it be not close, but the air open and free. For as for shape, I would have you rest upon the alleys of the side grounds, there to walk if you be disposed in the heat of the year or day; but to make account that the main garden is for the more temperate parts of the year, and in the heat of summer for the morning and the evening or overcast days.

For aviaries, I like them not, except they be of that largeness as they may be turfed, and have living plants and bushes set in them, that the birds may have more scope and natural nestling, and that no foulness appear in the floor of the aviary.

So I have made a platform of a princely garden, partly by precept, partly by drawing; not a model, but some general lines of it, and in this I have spared for no cost. But it is nothing for great princes, that for the most part taking advice with workmen, with no less cost set their things together, and sometimes add statues and such things for state and magnificence, but nothing to the true pleasure of a garden.

II. OF TRUTH

"WHAT is truth?" said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labour which men take in finding out of truth; nor again that, when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favour; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and

triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt that, if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the Fathers, in great severity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum*, because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it; is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and His Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of His Spirit. First He breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos; then He breathed light into the face of man; and still He breatheth and inspireth light into the face of His chosen. The poet that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: "It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof, below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below": so always, that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honour of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent, which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge—saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth is as

much as to say that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men. For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man." Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men: it being foretold that when Christ cometh "He shall not find faith upon the earth."

* * *

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY

THIS writer, born in 1581, was a familiar figure at the court of King James, becoming chaplain to Prince Henry in 1608. He is known in literature as author of a book of *Characters* based upon those of Theophrastus. In this work "other learned gentlemen, his friends," collaborated with him and it is now impossible definitely to assign the authorship of any particular "character." The "character" must not be confused with the portrait: one portrays a type, the other an individual. The work of Sir Thomas Overbury and his friends had many imitators, but the "character" in the nature of things has but a limited range. It soon became absorbed in the essay proper. Overbury died in 1613.

A FRANKLIN

HIS outside is an ancient yeoman of England, though his inside may give arms (with the best gentlemen) and ne'er see the herald. There is no truer servant in the house than himself. Though he be master, he says not to his servants, "Go to field," but, "Let us go"; and with his own eye, doth both fatten his flock, and set forward all manner of husbandry. He is taught by nature to be contented with a little; his own fold yields him both food and raiment: he is pleased with any nourishment God sends, whilst curious gluttony ransacks, as it were, Noah's Ark for food, only to feed the riot of one meal. He is never known to go to law; understanding to be lawbound among men is like to be hidebound among his beasts; they thrive not under it: in that such men sleep as unquietly as if their pillows were stuffed with lawyers' penknives. When he builds, no poor tenant's cottage hinders his prospect: they are indeed his almshouses, though there can be painted on them no such superscription: he never sits up late, but when he hunts the badger, the vowed foe of his lambs: nor uses he any cruelty, but when he hunts the hare, nor subtlety, but when he setteth snares for the snite, or pitfalls for the blackbird; nor oppression, but when in the month of July, he goes to the next river, and shears his sheep. He allows of honest pastime, and thinks not the bones of the dead anything bruised, or the worse for it, though the

country lasses dance in the churchyard after evensong. Rock Monday, and the wake in summer, shrovings, the wakeful catches on Christmas Eve, hoky, or seed-cake, these he yearly keeps, yet holds them no relics of Popery. He is not so inquisitive after news derived from the privy closet, when the finding of an eyrie of hawks in his own ground, or the foaling of a colt come of a good strain, are tidings more pleasant, more profitable. He is lord paramount within himself, though he hold by never so mean a tenure; and dies the more contentedly (though he leave his heir young), in regard he leaves him not liable to a covetous guardian. Lastly, to end him: he cares not when his end comes, he needs not fear his audit, for his *quietus* is in Heaven.

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IZAAK WALTON

Walton was born in 1593. He was a London tradesman—it is not certain whether he was an ironmonger or a linen-draper. In one respect, he presents a contrast to the other "miscellaneous" writers of his day. They were bookmen; he loved the open air. They were often men of affairs, too, who took a not inconsiderable share in the stirring events of those troubled times. He let these things pass him by as though they never existed, and his serene pages are never for one moment ruffled by political controversy, although he was personally acquainted with some of the great figures of the time. He was a most delightful biographer, and the *Lives* of his friends Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Sanderson, and Herbert are classics. Walton died in 1683.

The following passage is taken from *The Compleat Angler*.

PISCATOR AND VENATOR

PISCATOR. Well, Scholar, I have held you too long about these cadis, and smaller fish, and rivers, and fish-ponds; and my spirits are almost spent, and so I doubt is your patience; but being we are now almost at Tottenham where I first met you, and where we are to part, I will lose no time, but give you a little direction now to make and order your lines, and to colour the hair of which you make your lines, for that is very needful to be known of an angler; and also how to paint your rod, especially your top; for a right-grown top is a choice commodity, and should be preserved from the water soaking into it, which makes it in wet weather to be heavy and fish ill-favouredly, and not true; and also it rots quickly for want of painting: and I think a good top is worth preserving, or I had not taken care to keep a top above twenty years.

But first for your Line. First note, that you are to take care that your hair be round and clear, and free from galls, or scabs, or frets: for a well-chosen, even, clear, round hair, of a kind of glass-colour, will prove as strong as three uneven scabby hairs that are ill-chosen, and full of galls or unevenness. You shall seldom find a black hair but it is round, but many white are flat and uneven; therefore, if you get a lock of right, round, clear, glass-colour hair, make much of it.

And for making your line, observe this rule: first, let your hair be clean washed ere you go about to twist it; and then choose not only the clearest hair for it, but hairs that be of an equal bigness, for such do usually stretch all together and break all together, which hairs of an unequal bigness never do, but break singly, and so deceive the angler that trusts to them.

When you have twisted your links, lay them in water for a quarter of an hour at least, and then twist them over again before you tie them into a line: for those that do not so shall usually find their line to have a hair or two shrink, and be shorter than the rest, at the first fishing with it, which is so much of the strength of the line lost for want of first watering it, and then re-twisting it; and this is most visible in a seven-hair line, one of those which hath always a black hair in the middle.

And for dyeing of your hairs, do it thus: take a pint of strong ale, half a pound of soot, and a little quantity of the juice of walnut-tree leaves, and an equal quantity of alum; put these together into a pot, pan, or pipkin, and boil them half an hour; and having so done, let it cool; and being cold, put your hair into it, and there let it lie; it will turn your hair to be a kind of water or glass-colour, or greenish; and the longer you let it lie, the deeper coloured it will be. You might be taught to make many other colours, but it is to little purpose; for doubtless the water-colour or glass-coloured hair is the most choice and most useful for an angler, but let it not be too green.

But if you desire to colour hair greener, then do it thus: take a quart of small ale, half a pound of alum; then put these into a pan or pipkin, and your hair into it with them; then put it upon a fire, and let it boil softly for half an hour; and then take out your hair, and let it dry; and having so done, then take a pottle of water, and put into it two handfuls of marigolds, and cover it with a tile or what you think fit, and set it again on the fire, where it is to boil again softly for half an hour, about which time the scum will turn yellow; then put into it half a pound of copperas, beaten small, and with it the hair that you intend to colour; then let the hair be boiled softly till half the liquor be wasted, and then let it cool three or four hours, with your hair in it; and you are to observe that the more copperas you put into it, the greener it will be; but doubtless the pale green is best. But if you desire yellow hair, which is only good when the weeds rot,

then put in more marigolds; and abate most of the copperas, or leave it quite out, and take a little verdigris instead of it.

This for colouring your hair.

And as for painting your Rod, which must be in oil, you must first make a size with glue and water, boiled together until the glue be dissolved, and the size of a lye-colour: then strike your size upon the wood with a bristle, or a brush or pencil, whilst it is hot: that being quite dry, take white-lead, and a little red-lead, and a little coal-black, so much as altogether will make an ash-colour: grind these altogether with linseed-oil; let it be thick, and lay it thin upon the wood with a brush or pencil: this do for the ground of any colour to lie upon wood.

For a green, take pink and verdigris, and grind them together in linseed oil, as thin as you can well grind it: then lay it smoothly on with your brush, and drive it thin; once doing, for the most part, will serve, if you lay it well; and if twice, be sure your first colour be thoroughly dry before you lay on a second.

Well, Scholar, having now taught you to paint your rod, and we having still a mile to Tottenham High-Cross, I will, as we walk towards it in the cool shade of this sweet honeysuckle hedge, mention to you some of the thoughts and joys that have possessed my soul since we two met together. And these thoughts shall be told you, that you also may join with me in thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for our happiness. And that our present happiness may appear to be the greater, and we the more thankful for it, I will beg you to consider with me how many do, even at this very time, lie under the torment of the stone, the gout, and toothache; and this we are free from. And every misery that I miss is a new mercy; and therefore let us be thankful. There have been, since we met, others that have met disasters or broken limbs; some have been blasted, others thunder-strucken: and we have been freed from these, and all those many other miseries that threaten human nature; let us therefore rejoice and be thankful. Nay, which is a far greater mercy, we are free from the insupportable burthen of an accusing tormenting conscience; a misery that none can bear: and therefore let us praise Him for His preventing grace, and say, Every misery that I miss is a new mercy. Nay, let me tell you, there be many that have forty times our estates, that would give the greatest part of it to be healthful and cheerful like us, who, with the expense of a little money, have eat and drunk, and laughed, and angled, and sung, and slept securely; and rose next day and cast away care, and sung, and laughed, and angled again; which are blessings rich men cannot purchase with all their money. Let me tell you, Scholar, I have a rich neighbour that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get

more and more money; he is still drudging on, and says, that Solomon says "The diligent hand maketh rich"; and it is true indeed: but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy; for it was wisely said, by a man of great observation, "That there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." And yet God deliver us from pinching poverty; and grant, that having a competency, we may be content and thankful. Let not us repine, or so much as think the gifts of God unequally dealt, if we see another abound with riches; when, as God knows, the cares that are the keys that keep those riches often hang so heavily at the rich man's girdle, that they clog him with weary days and restless nights, even when others sleep quietly. We see but the outside of the rich man's happiness: few consider him to be like the silk-worm, that, when she seems to play, is, at the very same time, spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself; and this many rich men do, loading themselves with corroding cares, to keep what they have, probably, unconscionably got. Let us, therefore, be thankful for health and a competence; and above all, for a quiet conscience.

Let me tell you, Scholar, that Diogenes walked on a day, with his friend, to see a country fair; where he saw ribbons, and looking-glasses, and nut-crackers, and fiddles, and hobby-horses, and many other gim-cracks; and, having observed them, and all the other finnimbruns that make a complete country-fair, he said to his friend, "Lord, how many things are there in this world of which Diogenes hath no need!" And truly it is so, or might be so, with very many who vex and toil themselves to get what they have no need of. Can any man charge God, that He hath not given him enough to make his life happy? No, doubtless; for nature is content with a little. And yet you shall hardly meet with a man that complains not of some want; though he, indeed, wants nothing but his will; it may be, nothing but his will of his poor neighbour, for not worshipping or not flattering him: and thus, when we might be happy and quiet, we create trouble to ourselves. I have heard of a man that was angry with himself because he was no taller; and of a woman that broke her looking-glass because it would not shew her face to be as young and handsome as her next neighbour's was. And I knew another to whom God had given health and plenty; but a wife that nature had made peevish, and her husband's riches had made purse-proud; and must, because she was rich, and for no other virtue, sit in the highest pew in the church; which being denied her, she engaged her husband into a contention for it, and at last into a law-suit with a dogged neighbour who was as rich as he, and had a wife as peevish and purse-proud as the other: and this law-suit begot higher oppositions, and actionable words, and more vexations and law-suits; for you must remember that both were rich, and must therefore have their wills. Well! this wilful, purse-proud law-suit lasted

during the life of the first husband; after which his wife vext and chid, and chid and vext, till she also chid and vext herself into her grave: and so the wealth of these poor rich people was curst into a punishment, because they wanted meek and thankful hearts; for those only can make us happy. I knew a man that had health and riches; and several houses, all beautiful, and ready furnished; and would often trouble himself and family to be removing from one house to another: and being asked by a friend why he removed so often from one house to another, replied, "It was to find content in some one of them." But his friend, knowing his temper, told him, "If he would find content in any of his houses, he must leave himself behind him; for content will never dwell but in a meek and quiet soul." And this may appear, if we read and consider what our Saviour says in St. Matthew's Gospel; for He there says—"Blessed be the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And, Blessed be the meek, for they shall possess the earth." Not that the meek shall not also obtain mercy, and see God, and be comforted, and at last come to the kingdom of heaven: but in the meantime, he, and he only, possesses the earth, as he goes towards that kingdom of heaven, by being humble and cheerful, and content with what his good God had allotted him. He has no turbulent, repining, vexatious thoughts that he deserves better; nor is vext when he see others possest of more honour or more riches than his wise God has allotted for his share: but he possesses what he has with a meek and contented quietness, such a quietness as makes his very dreams pleasing, both to God and himself.

My honest Scholar, all this is told to incline you to thankfulness; and to incline you the more, let me tell you, that though the prophet David was guilty of murder and adultery, and many other of the most deadly sins, yet he was said to be a man after God's own heart, because he abounded more with thankfulness that any other that is mentioned in holy scripture, as may appear in his book of Psalms; where there is such a commixture, of his confessing of his sins and unworthiness, and such thankfulness for God's pardon and mercies, as did make him to be accounted, even by God himself, to be a man after his own heart: and let us, in that, labour to be as like him as we can; let not the blessings we receive daily from God make us not to value, or not praise Him, because they be common; let us not forget to praise Him for the innocent mirth and pleasure we have met with since we met together. What would a blind man give to see the pleasant rivers, and meadows, and flowers, and fountains, that we have met with since we met together? I have been told, that if a man that was born blind could obtain to have his sight for but only one hour during his whole life, and should, at the first opening of his

eyes, fix his sight upon the sun when it was in its full glory, either at the rising or setting of it, he would be so transported and amazed, and so admire the glory of it, that he would not willingly turn his eyes from that first ravishing object, to behold all the other various beauties this world could present to him. And this, and many other like blessings, we enjoy daily. And for the most of them, because they be so common, most men forget to pay their praises; but let not us: because it is a sacrifice so pleasing to Him that made that sun and us, and still protects us, and gives us flowers, and showers, and stomachs, and meat, and content, and leisure to go a-fishing.

Well, Scholar, I have almost tired myself, and, I fear, more than almost tired you. But I now see Tottenham High-Cross; and our short walk thither shall put a period to my too long discourse; in which my meaning was, and is, to plant that in your mind with which I labour to possess my own soul; that is, a meek and thankful heart. And to that end I have shewed you, that riches without them, do not make any man happy. But let me tell you, that riches with them remove many fears and cares. And therefore my advice is, that you endeavour to be honestly rich, or contentedly poor: but be sure that your riches be justly got, or you spoil all. For it is well said by Caussin, "He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping." Therefore be sure you look to that. And, in the next place, look to your health: and if you have it, praise God, and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of; a blessing that money cannot buy; and therefore value it, and be thankful for it. As for money, which may be said to be the third blessing, neglect it not: but note, that there is no necessity of being rich; for I told you, there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side them: and if you have a competence, enjoy it with a meek, cheerful, thankful heart. I will tell you, Scholar, I have heard a grave Divine say, that God has two dwellings; one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart; which Almighty God grant to me, and to my honest Scholar. And so you are welcome to Tottenham High-Cross.

VENATOR. Well, Master, I thank you for all your good directions; but for none more than this last, of thankfulness, which I hope I shall never forget. And pray let's now rest ourselves in this sweet shady arbour, which nature herself has woven with her own fine fingers; 'tis such a contexture of woodbines, sweetbriar, jasmine, and myrtle; and so interwoven, as will secure us both from the sun's violent heat, and from the approaching shower. And being set down, I will requite a part of your courtesies with a bottle of sack, milk, oranges, and sugar, which, all put together, make a drink like nectar; indeed, too good for any but us Anglers. And so, Master, here is a full glass to you of that liquor: and when you have pledged me, I will repeat the

Verses which I promised you: it is a Copy printed among some of Sir Henry Wotton's, and doubtless made either by him, or by a lover of angling. Come, Master, now drink a glass to me, and then I will pledge you, and fall to my repetition; it is a description of such country recreations as I have enjoyed since I had the happiness to fall into your company.

Quivering fears, heart-tearing cares,
Anxious sighs, untimely tears,
  Fly, fly to courts,
  Fly to fond worldings' sports,
Where strain'd sardonic smiles are glosing still,
And Grief is forc'd to laugh against her will;
  Where mirth's but mummery,
  And sorrows only real be.

Fly from our country pastimes, fly,
Sad troops of human misery.
  Come, serene looks,
  Clear as the crystal brooks,
Or the pure azur'd heaven that smiles to see
The rich attendance of our poverty:
  Peace and a secure mind,
  Which all men seek, we only find.

Abused mortals! did you know
Where joy, heart's-ease, and comforts grow,
  You'd scorn proud towers,
  And seek them in these bowers;
Where winds, sometimes, our woods perhaps may shake,
But blust'ring care could never tempest make,
  Nor murmurs e'er come nigh us,
  Saving of fountains that glide by us.

Here's no fantastick mask, nor dance,
But of our kids that frisk and prance;
  Nor wars are seen
  Unless upon the green
Two harmless lambs are butting one the other,
Which done, both bleating run, each to his mother,
  And wounds are never found,
  Save what the plough-share gives the ground.

Here are no false entrapping baits,
To hasten too, too hasty Fates,
  Unless it be
  The fond credulity
Of silly fish, which worldling like, still look
Upon the bait, but never on the hook;
  Nor envy, unless among
  The birds, for prize of their sweet song.

Go, let the diving negro seek
For gems, hid in some forlorn creek:
We all pearls scorn,
Save what the dewy morn
Congeals upon each little spire of grass
Which careless shepherds beat down as they pass:
And gold ne'er here appears,
Save what the yellow Ceres bears.

Blest silent groves, oh may yet be,
For ever, mirth's best nursery!
May pure contents
For ever pitch their tents
Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains,
And peace still slumber by these purling fountains:
Which we may, every year,
Meet when we come a-fishing here.

PISCATOR. Trust me, Scholar, I thank you heartily for these Verses: they be choicely good, and doubtless made by a lover of angling. Come, now, drink a glass to me, and I will requite you with another very good copy: it is a farewell to the vanities of the world, and some say written by Sir Harry Wotton, who I told you was an excellent angler. But let them be writ by whom they will, he that writ them had a brave soul, and must needs be possest with happy thoughts at the time of their composure.

Farewell, ye gilded follies, pleasing troubles;
Farewell, ye honour'd rags, ye glorious bubbles;
Fame's but a hollow echo; Gold, pure clay;
Honour the darling but of one short day;
Beauty, th' eye's idol, but a damask'd skin;
State, but a golden prison, to live in
And torture free-born minds; embroider'd Trains,
Merely but pageants for proud swelling veins;
And Blood allied to greatness is alone
Inherited, not purchas'd, nor our own.
Fame, Honour, Beauty, State, Train, Blood, and Birth,
Are but the fading blossoms of the earth.

I would be great, but that the sun doth still
Level his rays against the rising hill:
I would be high, but see the proudest oak
Most subject to the rending thunder-stroke:
I would be rich, but see men, too unkind,
Dig in the bowels of the richest mind:
I would be wise, but that I often see
The fox suspected, whilst the ass goes free:
I would be fair, but see the fair and proud,

Like the bright sun, oft setting in a cloud:
I would be poor, but know the humble grass
Still trampled on by each unworthy ass:
Rich, hated; wise, suspected; scorn'd, if poor;
Great, fear'd; fair, tempted; high, still envy'd more.
I have wish'd all; but now I wish for neither,
Great, high, rich, wise, nor fair: poor I'll be rather.

Would the World now adopt me for her heir;
Would beauty's Queen entitle me the fair;
Fame speak me fortune's minion; could I "vie
Angels" with India; with a speaking eye
Command bare heads, bow'd knees; strike justice dumb,
As well as blind and lame; or give a tongue
To stones by epitaphs; be call'd "great master"
In the loose rhymes of every poetaster?
Could I be more than any man that lives,
Great, fair, rich, wise, all in superlatives;
Yet I more freely would these gifts resign,
Than ever fortune would have made them mine;
And hold one minute of this holy leisure
Beyond the riches of this empty pleasure.

Welcome, pure thoughts; welcome, ye silent groves;
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves.
Now the wing'd people of the sky shall sing
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring:
A pray'r-book, now, shall be my looking-glass,
In which I will adore sweet virtue's face.
Here dwell no hateful looks, no palace-cares,
No broken vows dwell here, nor pale-fac'd fears;
Then here I'll sit, and sigh my hot love's folly,
And learn t' affect an holy melancholy:
And if contentment be a stranger then,
I'll ne'er look for it, but in heaven, again.

VENATOR. Well, Master, these verses be worthy to keep a room in every man's memory. I thank you for them; and I thank you for your many instructions, which, God willing, I will not forget. And as St. Austin, in his *Confessions,* commemorates the kindness of his friend Verecundus, for lending him and his companion a country house, because there they rested and enjoyed themselves, free from the troubles of the world, so, having had the like advantage, both by your conversation and the art you have taught me, I ought ever to do the like; for, indeed, your company and discourse have been so useful and pleasant, that, I may truly say, I have only lived since I enjoyed them and turned angler, and not before. Nevertheless, here I must part with you; here in this now sad place, where I was

so happy as first to meet you: but I shall long for the ninth of May: for then I hope again to enjoy your beloved company, at the appointed time and place. And now I wish for some somniferous potion, that might force me to sleep away the intermitted time, which will pass away with me as tediously as it does with men in sorrow; nevertheless I will make it as short as I can, by my hopes and wishes: and, my good Master, I will not forget the doctrine which you told me Socrates taught his scholars, that they should not think to be honoured so much for being philosophers, as to honour philosophy by their virtuous lives. You advised me to the like concerning Angling, and I will endeavour to do so; and to live like those many worthy men, of which you made mention in the former part of your discourse. This is my firm resolution. And as a pious man advised his friend, that, to beget mortification, he should frequent churches, and view monuments, and charnel-houses, and then and there consider how many dead bodies time had piled up at the gates of death, so when I would beget content, and increase confidence in the power, and wisdom, and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows, by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other various little living creatures that are not only created, but fed, man knows not how, by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in him. This is my purpose; and so, let everything that hath breath praise the Lord: and let the blessing of St. Peter's Master be with mine.

PISCATOR. And upon all that are lovers of virtue; and dare trust in his providence; and be quiet; and go a-Angling.

"Study to be quiet."

* * *

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

In the work of this Norwich physician who lived from 1605 to 1682 we see the English essay developing along lines which were to prove extremely fruitful. A wise and observant man, who pursued his way undisturbed by the troubles of the Civil War, he followed his own thoughts and gave us an expression so intimate and personal that he is much more real to us than most of the notable figures of his day. The matchless harmony of his prose has never been surpassed, but at the same time he is not everybody's writer. He has had to suffer long periods of neglect, and it is noteworthy that Lamb had much to do with his reinstatement in popular regard. The result is that though he still is not read widely, it is generally recognized that he is a writer of note.

The following passage is taken from *Religio Medici*.

OF HARMONY

I CAN look a whole day with delight upon a handsome Picture, though it be but of an Horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony; and sure there is music even in the beauty, and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a music where ever there is a harmony, order, or proportion: and thus far we may maintain the music of the Spheres; for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whosoever is harmonically composed delights in harmony; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all Church-Music. For myself, not only from my obedience, but my particular Genius, I do embrace it: for even that vulgar and Tavern-Music, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the First Composer. There is something in it of Divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an Hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole World, and creatures of God; such a melody to the ear, as the whole World, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say, with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto Music: thus some, whose temper of body agrees, and humours the constitution of their souls, are born Poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto Rhythm. This made Tacitus, in the very first line of his Story, fall upon a verse; and Cicero, the worst of Poets, but declaiming for a Poet, falls in the very first sentence upon a perfect Hexameter. I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession; I do not secretly implore and wish for Plagues, rejoice at Famines, revolve Ephemerides and Almanacks in expectation of malignant Aspects, fatal Conjunctions, and Eclipses. I rejoice not at unwholesome Springs, nor unseasonable Winters: my Prayer goes with the Husbandman's; I desire every thing in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be put out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me. I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities. Where I do him no good, methinks it is scarce honest gain; though I confess 'tis but the worthy salary of our well-intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed, but heartily sorry, that, besides death, there are diseases incurable: yet not for my own sake, or that they be beyond my Art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And to speak more

generally, those three Noble Professions which all civil Commonwealths do honour, are raised upon the fall of Adam, and are not any way exempt from their infirmities; there are not only diseases incurable in Physic, but cases indissolvable in Laws, Vices incorrigible in Divinity. If General Councils may err, I do not see why particular Courts should be infallible: their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of Man, and the Laws of one do but condemn the rules of another; as Aristotle oft-times the opinions of his Predecessors, because, though agreeable to reason, yet were not consonant to his own rules, and the Logic of his proper Principles. Again (to speak nothing of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only, but whose nature is unknown) I can cure the Gout or Stone in some, sooner than Divinity, Pride, or Avarice in others. I can cure Vices by Physic when they remain incurable by Divinity, and shall obey my Pills when they contemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labour against our own cure; for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no *Catholicon* or universal remedy I know, but this; which, though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is Nectar, and a pleasant potion of immortality.

For my Conversation, it is like the Sun's, with all men, and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad, and the worst, best; that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities wherein they are good: there is no man's mind of such discordant and jarring a temper, to which a tunable disposition may not strike a harmony. *Magnæ virtutes, nec minora vitia;* it is the posie of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst; there are in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which by an *Antiperistasis* become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the contagion of their enemy vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is also thus in nature: the greatest Balsams do lie also enveloped in the bodies of most powerful Corrosives. I say, moreover, and I ground upon experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own Antidote, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves, without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it 's the corruption that I fear within me, not the contagion of commerce without me. 'Tis that unruly regiment within me, that will destroy me; 'tis I that do infect myself; the man without a Navel yet lives in me; I feel that original canker and corrode and devour me; and therefore *Defenda me* Dios *de me,* "Lord deliver me from myself," is a part of my Litany, and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a Microcosm, and carries the whole World about him. *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus,* though it be the Apophthegm of a wise man, is yet true in the

mouth of a fool. Indeed, though in a Wilderness, a man is never alone, not only because he is with himself and his own thoughts, but because he is with the Devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters up those disordered motions which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor any thing that can be said to be alone and by itself, but God, Who is His own circle, and can subsist by Himself; all others, besides their dissimilary and Heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist without the concourse of God, and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief, there can be nothing truly alone and by itself, which is not truly one; and such is only God; all others do transcend an unity, and so by consequence are many.

* * *

ABRAHAM COWLEY

In the days when English prose was finding itself, the influence of Abraham Cowley (1618-67) counted for much. Under his hand the essay took definite shape and a prose-style evolved that was to show itself equal to any demand that might be made. Cowley was a staunch supporter of the King during the Civil War, following the royal family into exile. At the Restoration he returned to England and spent his remaining years in writing.

OF MYSELF

IT IS a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise from him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient, for my own contentment, that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt, than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont

to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn, without book, the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now—which, I confess, I wonder at myself—may appear at the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed, with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish; but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

> This only grant me, that my means may lie
> Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
> Some honour I would have,
> Not from great deeds, but good alone;
> Th' unknown are better than ill-known.
> Rumour can ope the grave;
> Acquaintance I would have; but when 't depends
> Not on the number, but the choice of friends.
>
> Books should, not business, entertain the light,
> And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
> My house a cottage, more
> Than palace, and should fitting be
> For all my use, no luxury.
> My garden painted o'er
> With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
> Horace might envy in his Sabine field.
>
> Thus would I double my life's fading space,
> For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
> And in this true delight,
> These unbought sports, that happy state,
> I would not fear nor wish my fate,
> But boldly say each night,
> To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
> Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets, for the conclusion is taken out of Horace; and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, the characters in me. They were like letters cut in the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early, is a hard question: I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first

with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there: for I remember when I began to read, and take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour—I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion—but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there—though my understanding had little to do with all this—and by degrees, with the tinkling of the rhyme, and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university; but was soon torn from thence by that public violent storm, which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars, to me, the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses in the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life; that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant—for that was the state then of the English and the French courts—yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage; though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I eat at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition, in banishment and public distresses; yet I could not abstain from renewing my old school-boy's wish, in a copy of verses to the same effect:

> Well, then, I now do plainly see
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But

I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it—

> Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,
> Nor at the Exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar;
> Content thyself with the small barren praise
> Which thy neglected verse does raise, etc.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into it a *corpus perditum,* without making capitulations, or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at man, who says to his soul, Take thy ease: I met presently not only with many little incumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness—a new misfortune to me—as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course; *Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum.* Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married; though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

> *Nec vos dulcissima mundi*
> *Nomina, vos musæ, libertas, otia, libri,*
> *Hortique, sylvæque, animâ remanente relinquam.*
>
> Nor by me e'er shall you,
> You of all names the sweetest and the best,
> You muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
> You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
> As long as life itself forsakes not me.

* * *

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

Sir William Temple (1628-99) was a statesman and diplomat who employed his leisure in writing on the many subjects suggested by his own wide interests. These subjects range "from gardening to diplomacy, from gout to Greek learning." His style shows remarkable finish and his writing strikes a more peculiarly modern note than that of any of his contemporaries.

The following essay is taken from *Upon the Gardens of Epicurus; or of Gardening in the Year 1685.*

BEAUTIFUL GARDENS

IF WE believe the Scripture, we must allow that God Almighty esteemed the life of a man in a garden the happiest he could give him, or else he would not have placed Adam in that of Eden;

that it was the state of innocence and pleasure; and that the life of husbandry and cities came after the fall, with guilt and with labour.

Where paradise was, has been much debated, and little agreed; but what sort of place is meant by it may perhaps easier be conjectured. It seems to have been a Persian word, since Xenophon and other Greek authors mention it, as what was much in use and delight among the kings of those Eastern countries. Strabo, describing Jericho, says: "*Ibi est palmetum, cui immixtæ sunt etiam aliæ stirpes Hortenses, locus ferax, palmis abundans, spatio stadiorum centum, totus irriguus, ibi est regi et balsami paradisus.*" He mentions another place to be "*prope libanum et paradisum.*" And Alexander is written to have seen Cyrus' tomb in paradise, being a tower not very great, and covered with a shade of trees about it. So that a paradise among them seems to have been a large space of ground, adorned and beautified with all sorts of trees, both of fruits and of forest, either found there before it was inclosed, or planted thereafter; either cultivated like gardens, for shades and for walks, with fountains or streams, and all sorts of plants usual in the climate, and pleasant to the eye, the smell, or the taste; or else employed like our parks, for inclosure and harbour of all sorts of wild beasts, as well as for the pleasure of riding and walking; and so they were of more or less extent, and of different entertainment, according to the several humours of the princes that ordered and inclosed them.

Semiramis is the first we are told of in story, that brought them in use through her empire, and was so fond of them as to make one wherever she built, and in all, or most of the provinces she subdued, which are said to have been from Babylon as far as India. The Assyrian kings continued this custom and care, or rather this pleasure, till one of them brought in the use of smaller and more regular gardens; for having married a wife he was fond of, out of one of the provinces, where such paradises or gardens were much in use, and the country lady not well bearing the air of inclosure of the palace in Babylon, to which the Assyrian kings used to confine themselves, he made her gardens not only within the palaces, but upon terraces raised with earth, over the arched roofs, and even upon the top of the highest tower, planted them with all sorts of fruit trees as well as other plants and flowers, the most pleasant of that country; and thereby made at least the most airy gardens, as well as the most costly that have ever been heard of in the world. This lady may probably have been a native of the provinces of Chasimer or Damascus, which have in all times been the happiest regions for fruits of all the East, by the excellence of soil, the position of mountains, the frequency of streams, rather than the advantages of climate. And it is a great pity we do not yet see the history of Chasimer, which Monsieur Bernier assured me he had translated out of Persian, and intended to publish, and of

which he has given such a taste, in his excellent memoirs of the Mogul's country.

The next gardens we read of are those of Solomon, planted with all sorts of fruit trees, and watered with fountains; and though we have no more particular description of them, yet we may find they were the places where he passed the times of his leisure and delight, where the houses as well as grounds were adorned with all that could be of pleasing and elegant, and were the retreats and entertainments of those among his wives that he loved the best; and it is not improbable that the paradises mentioned by Strabo were planted by this great and wisest king. But the idea of the garden must be very great, if it answer at all to that of the gardener, who must have employed a great deal of his care and of his study, as well as of his leisure and thought, in these entertainments, since he writ of all plants, from the cedar to the shrub.

What the gardens of the Hesperides were, we have little or no account, further than the mention of them, and thereby the testimony of their having been in use and request in such remoteness of place and antiquity of time.

The garden of Alcinous, described by Homer, seems wholly poetical, and made at the pleasure of the painter, like the rest of the romantic palace in that little barren island of Phæacia or Corfu. Yet, as all the pieces of this transcendent genius are composed with excellent knowledge, as well as fancy, so they seldom fail of instruction as well as delight, to all that read him. The seat of this garden, joining to the gates of the palace, the compass of the inclosure being four acres, the tall trees of shade, as well as those of fruit, the two fountains, the one for the use of the garden, and the other of the palace, the continual succession of fruits throughout the whole year are, for aught I know, the best rules or provisions that can go towards composing the best gardens; nor is it unlikely that Homer may have drawn this picture after the like of some he had seen in Ionia, the country and usual abode of this divine poet, and, indeed, the region of the most refined pleasure and luxury, as well as invention and wit: for the humour and custom of gardens may have descended earlier into the Lower Asia, from Damascus, Assyria, and other parts of the eastern empires, though they seem to have made late entrance and smaller improvement in those of Greece and Rome; at least in no proportion to their other inventions or refinements of pleasure and luxury.

The long and flourishing peace of the two first empires gave earlier rise and growth to learning and civility, and all the consequences of them, in magnificence and elegance of building and gardening, whereas Greece and Rome were almost perpetually engaged in quarrels and wars either abroad or at home, and so were busy in actions that were

done under the sun, rather than those under the shade. These were the entertainments of the softer nations that fell under the virtue and prowess of the two last empires, which from those conquests brought home mighty increases both of riches and luxury, and so perhaps lost more than they got by the spoils of the East. . . .

Whoever begins a garden ought, in the first place and above all, to consider the soil, upon which the taste not only of his fruits, but his legumes, and even herbs and salads, will wholly depend; and the default of soil is without remedy: for, although all borders of fruit may be made with what earth you please (if you will be at the charge), yet it must be renewed in two or three years, or it runs into the nature of the ground where it is brought. Old trees spread their roots farther than anybody's care extends, or the forms of the garden will allow; and, after all, where the soil about you is ill, the air is too in a degree, and has influence upon the taste of fruit. What Horace says of the production of kitchen gardens, under the name of *caulis,* is true of all the best sort of fruits, and may determine the choice of soil for all gardens:

> *Caule suburbano, qui siccis crevit in agris,*
> *Dulcior; irriguis nihil est elutius hortis.*
>
> Plants from dry fields those of the town excel;
> Nothing more tasteless is than watered grounds.

Any man had better throw away his care and his money upon anything else, than upon a garden in wet or moist ground. Peaches and grapes will have no taste but upon a sand or gravel; but the richer these are, the better; and neither salads, pease, or beans, have at all the taste upon a clay or rich earth as they have upon either of the others, though the size and colour of fruits and plants may, perhaps, be more upon the worse soils.

Next to your choice of soil, is to suit your plants to your ground, since of this every one is not master; though perhaps Varro's judgment, upon this case, is the wisest and the best; for to one that asked him, what he should do if his father or ancestors had left him a seat in an ill air, or upon an ill soil, he answered: "Why, sell it, and buy another in good." "But what if I cannot get half the worth?" "Why, then take a quarter; but however sell it for anything rather than live upon it."

Of all sorts of soil, the best is that upon a sandy gravel, or a rosiny sand; whoever lies upon either of these may run boldly into all the best sort of peaches and grapes, how shallow soever the turf be upon them; and whatever other tree will thrive in these soils, the fruits shall be of a much finer taste than any other, a richer soil will do well enough for apricots, plums, pears, or figs; but still the more of the

sand in your earth the better, and the worse the more of the clay, which is proper for oaks and no other tree that I know of.

Fruits should be suited to the climate among us, as well as the soil; for there are degrees of one and the other in England, where it is to little purpose to plant any of the best fruits, as peaches or grapes, hardly I doubt beyond Northamptonshire, at the farthest northwards; and I thought it very prudent in a gentleman of my friends in Staffordshire, who is a great lover of his garden, to pretend no higher, though his soil be good enough, than to the perfection of plums; and in these (by bestowing south walls upon them) he has very well succeeded, which he could never have done in attempts upon peaches and grapes; and a good plum is certainly better than an ill peach.

When I was at Cosevelt, with that bishop of Munster that made so much noise in his time, I observed no other trees but cherries in a great garden he had made. He told me the reason was because he found no other fruit would ripen well in that climate, or upon that soil; and therefore, instead of being curious in others, he had only been so in the sorts of that, whereof he had so many, as never to be without them from May to the end of September.

As to the size of a garden, which will, perhaps, in time, grow extravagant among us, I think from four or five to seven or eight acres is as much as any gentleman need design, and will furnish as much of all that is expected from it, as any nobleman will have occasion to use in his family.

In every garden four things are necessary to be provided for: flowers, fruit, shade, and water; and whoever lays out a garden, without all these, must not pretend in it any perfection; it ought to lie to the best parts of the house, or to those of the master's commonest use, so as to be but like one of the rooms out of which you step into another. The part of your garden next your house (besides the walks that go round it) should be a parterre for flowers, or grass plots bordered with flowers; or if, according to the newest mode, it be cast all into grass plots and gravel walks, the dryness of these should be relieved with fountains, and the plainness of those with statues; otherwise, if large, they have an ill effect upon the eye. However, the part next the house should be open, and no other fruit but upon the walls. If this take up one half of the garden, the other should be fruit trees, unless some grove for shade lie in the middle. If it take up a third part only, then the next third may be dwarf trees, and the last standard fruit; or else the second part fruit trees, and the third all sorts of wintergreens, which provide for all seasons of the year. . . .

The best figure of a garden is either a square or an oblong, and either upon a flat or a descent; they have all their beauties, but the best I esteem an oblong upon a descent. The beauty, the air, the view, make amends for the expense, which is very great in finishing

and supporting the terrace walks, in levelling the parterres, and in the stone stairs that are necessary from one to the other.

The perfectest figure of a garden I ever saw, either at home or abroad, was that of Moor Park in Hertfordshire, when I knew it about thirty years ago. It was made by the Countess of Bedford, esteemed among the greatest wits of her time, and celebrated by Doctor Donne, and with very great care, excellent contrivance, and much cost; but greater sums may be thrown away without effect or honour, if there want sense of proportion to money, or if nature be not followed, which I take to be the great rule in this, and perhaps in everything else, as far as the conduct not only of our lives, but our governments. And whether the greatest of mortal men should attempt the forcing of nature, may best be judged by observing how seldom God Almighty does it himself, by so few true and undisputed miracles as we see or hear of in the world. For my own part, I know not three wiser precepts for the conduct either of princes or private men, than

——*Servare modum, finemque tueri,*
Naturamque sequi. . . .

What I have said of gardening is perhaps enough for any gentleman to know, so as to make no great faults, nor to be much imposed upon in the designs of that kind, which I think ought to be applauded and encouraged in all countries; that and building being a sort of creation, that raise beautiful fabrics and figures out of nothing, that make the convenience and pleasure of all private habitations, that employ many hands and circulate much money among the poorer sort and artisans, that are a public service to one's country, by the example as well as effect, which adorn the scene, improve the earth, and even the air itself in some degree. The rest that belongs to this subject must be a gardener's part; upon whose skill, diligence, and care the beauty of the grounds and excellence of the fruits will much depend. Though if the soil and sorts be well chosen, well suited, and disposed to the walls, the ignorance or carelessness of the servants can hardly leave the master disappointed. . . .

I may perhaps be allowed to know something of this trade, since I have so long allowed myself to be good for nothing else, which few men will do, or enjoy their gardens, without often looking abroad to see how other matters play, what motions in the state, and what invitations they may hope for into other scenes.

For my own part, as the country life, and this part of it more particularly, were the inclination of my youth itself, so they are the pleasure of my age; and I can truly say that, among many great employments that have fallen to my share, I have never asked or sought for any one of them, but often endeavoured to escape from them, into the ease and freedom of a private scene where a man may

go his own way and his own pace in the common paths or circles of life.

> But, above all, the learned read, and ask
> By what means you may gently pass your age,
> What lessons care, what makes thee thine own friend,
> What truly calms the mind; honour, or wealth,
> Or else a private path of stealing life.

These are questions that a man ought at least to ask himself, whether he asks others or no, and to choose his course of life rather by his own humour and temper than by common accidents or advice of friends; at least if the Spanish proverb be true, that a fool knows more in his own house than a wise man in another's.

The measure of choosing well is, whether a man likes what he has chosen; which, I thank God, has befallen me; and though, among the follies of my life, building and planting have not been the least, and have cost me more than I have the confidence to own, yet they have been fully recompensed by the sweetness and satisfaction of this retreat, where, since my resolution taken of never entering again into any public employments, I have passed five years without ever going once to town, though I am almost in sight of it, and have a house there always ready to receive me. Nor has this been any sort of affectation, as some have thought it, but a mere want of desire or humour to make so small a remove; for when I am in this corner, I can truly say, with Horace:

> Me when the cold Digentian stream revives,
> What does my friend believe I think or ask?
> Let me yet less possess, so I may live,
> Whate'er of life remains, unto myself.
> May I have books enough, and one year's store,
> Not to depend upon each doubtful hour;
> This is enough of mighty Jove to pray,
> Who, as he pleases, gives and takes away.

That which makes the cares of gardening more necessary, or at least more excusable, is, that all men eat fruit that can get it; so as the choice is only whether one will eat good or ill; and between these the difference is not greater in point of taste and delicacy than it is of health: for the first I will only say that whoever has used to eat good will do very great penance when he comes to ill; and for the other I think nothing is more evident than as ill or unripe fruit is extremely unwholesome, and causes so many untimely deaths, or so much sickness about autumn, in all great cities where it is greedily sold as well as eaten; so no part of diet, in any season, is so healthful, so natural, and so agreeable to the stomach, as good and well-ripened fruits; for this I make the measure of their being good: and, let the kinds be what

they will, if they will not ripen perfectly in our climate, they are better never planted, or never eaten. I can say it for myself at least, and all my friends, that the season of summer fruits is ever the season of health with us, which I reckon from the beginning of June to the end of September; and for all sicknesses of the stomach (from which most others are judged to proceed), I do not think any that are, like me, the most subject to them, shall complain whenever they eat thirty or forty cherries before meals, or the like proportion of strawberries, white figs, soft peaches, or grapes perfectly ripe. But these after Michaelmas I do not think wholesome with us, unless attended by some fit of hot and dry weather, more than is usual after that season; when the frosts or the rain hath taken them, they grow dangerous, and nothing but the autumn and winter pears are to be reckoned in season, besides apples, which, with cherries, are of all other the most innocent food, and perhaps the best physic. Now whoever will be sure to eat good fruit must do it out of a garden of his own; for, besides the choice so necessary in the sorts, the soil, and so many other circumstances that go to compose a good garden, or produce good fruits, there is something very nice in gathering them, and choosing the best, even from the same tree. The best sorts of all among us, which I esteem the white figs and the soft peaches, will not carry without suffering. The best fruit that is bought has no more of the master's care than how to raise the greatest gains; his business is to have as much fruit as he can upon a few trees; whereas the way to have it excellent is to have but little upon many trees. So that for all things out of a garden, either of salads or fruits, a poor man will eat better, that has one of his own, than a rich man that has none. And this is all I think of necessary and useful to be known upon this subject.

* * *

JOHN DRYDEN

The extreme adaptability which made it possible for Dryden to trim his course to suit the quickly changing currents of his time also made his prose an apt interpretation of the newer spirit. He left behind him the involved style and euphuistic conceits that were typical of the Elizabethans, and by dexterous use of the short sentence forged a newer style that was vigorous and expressive. What was lost in splendour was certainly gained in clearness. He was born in 1631, and for forty years he produced literary works of almost every conceivable kind —poems, plays, and prose works. In nearly every branch of literature that he undertook he attained pre-eminence. It has been maintained as a fault against him that he was ever ready to change his religious and political opinions, but the Revolution of 1688 found him, for

once, unwilling to alter his beliefs. He maintained his attachment to Catholicism though he had to see the Laureateship taken from himself to be conferred upon his bitter enemy, Shadwell. He died in 1700.

The following passage is taken from the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.

SOME GREAT DRAMATISTS

TO BEGIN then with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern and perhaps ancient poets had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes anything you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great, when some great occasion is presented to him; no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets:

Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.

The consideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eton say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better done in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Jonson never equalled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at the highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him.

Beaumont and Fletcher, of whom I am next to speak, had, with the advantage of Shakespeare's wit, which was their precedent, great natural gifts, improved by study; Beaumont especially being so accurate a judge of plays, that Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his writings to his censure, and, 'tis thought, upon his judgment in correcting, if not contriving, all his plots. What value he had for him appears by the verses he wrote to him; and therefore I need speak no further of it. The first play that brought Fletcher and him into esteem was their *Philaster;* for before that they had written two or three very unsuccessfully, as the like is reported of Ben Jonson, before he wrote *Every Man in his Humour*. Their plots were generally more regular than Shakespeare's, especially those which were made before

Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation much better; whose wild debaucheries and quickness of wit in repartees no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humour, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe; they represented all the passions very lively, but above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection; what words have since been taken in are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage; two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Jonson's: the reason is because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays which suits generally with all men's humours. Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs.

As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him while he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In all his works you find little to retrench or alter. Wit and language, and humour also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavouring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such a height. Humour was his proper sphere; and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them: there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times, whom he has not translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. But he has done his robberies so openly that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets, is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, it was, that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his comedies especially; perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them: wherein, though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the most correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets;

Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing: I admire him, but I love Shakespeare.

* * *

DANIEL DEFOE

Much of Defoe's life is shrouded in mystery. He was born in London in 1659, and became by turns trader, soldier, journalist, and pamphleteer. He was declared bankrupt, confined in the pillory, and put in prison. All the while his pen was indefatigable and his output amazing. He was, first and foremost, a realist. He gave expression to the aspirations and ideas of the middle classes. He was a close observer and set down facts as he saw them. More than that, he analysed those facts and drew the inevitable moral. His writings include *Robinson Crusoe*, and many other realistic works of fiction; many political pamphlets; and a mass of miscellaneous journalism. He died in 1731.

The following passage appeared in *Mist's Journal*, July 5, 1718. In the issue for August 2 was printed the following retractation: "The Island of St. Vincent not Destroyed. They pretend to tell us a strange Story, viz., that the Island of St. Vincent is found again, and is turn'd into a Volcano, or burning Mountain; but we must acknowledge we do not believe one word of it."

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ISLE OF ST. VINCENT

WE HAVE a piece of public news this time of such consequence, and so necessary for all our readers to be fully acquainted with, that our friends who have written several letters to us, which otherwise deserve publishing, must excuse us for this week.

This relates to the entire desolation of the island of St. Vincent, in the West Indies, by the immediate hand of nature, directed by Providence, and in a manner astonishing to all the world, the like of which never happened since the creation, or, at least, since the destruction of the earth by water in the general Deluge.

Our accounts of this come from so many several hands, and several places, that it would be impossible to bring the letters all separately into this journal; and when we had done so, or attempted to do so, would have the story confused, and the world not perfectly informed. We have therefore thought it better to give the substance of this amazing accident in one collection, making together as full and as distinct account of the whole as we believe is possible to come at by any intelligence whatsoever; and at the close of this account we shall give some probable guesses at the natural cause of so terrible an operation. The relation is as follows, viz:

An account of the island of St. Vincent, in the West Indies, and of its entire destruction on the 26th of March last, with some rational suggestions concerning the causes and manner of it.

The island of St. Vincent is the most populous of any possessed by the Caribbeans; its latitude is sixteen degrees north from the line. Those who have seen the island Ferro or Fietre, one of the Canaries, affirm that this is much of the same figure. It may be about eight leagues in length, and six in breadth. There are in it several high mountains, and very fruitful plains, if they were cultivated. The Caribbeans have many fair villages, where they live pleasantly, and without any disturbance; and though they have a jealousy of strangers, yet do they not deny them the bread of the country, which is cossava, water, fruits, and other provisions growing in their country, if they want them, taking in exchange wedges, hooks, and other implements of iron, which they much esteem.

On the 24th March a French sloop arrived at Martinico that passed by the island of St. Vincent the 22nd, and, as the master reported, he bought some fish of some of the savages who inhabited there, and who came off to him in three canoes. He says that all was safe and in very good condition there, for anything he perceived, only that some of his seamen report, since the disaster, that one of the Indians told them they had been terribly frighted with earthquakes for some time, and with flashes of fire like lightning, which did not come out of the clouds as usual, but out of the earth; and that they had felt these earthquakes for a month past, to their very great amazement.

On the 27th, in the morning, the air was darkened in a dreadful manner; which darkness, by all accounts, seems to have extended over all the colonies and islands which were within 100 miles of the place, but was perceived to be more or less dark as those islands were farther or nearer from the place.

But that which is most remarkable of all is, that at some of the islands, and at Martinico in particular, a dreadful flash of lightning, as they called it, was seen on the 26th about eleven o'clock at night. This flash, which they called lightning, we shall account for in the following part of this relation.

It is to be observed, in the next place, that as there were several ships, or other vessels at sea, in several ports among the islands, some of these had a more terrible sight of this thing than others; particularly they write that in one sloop, which is come into Martinico, the men are so terrified still, and were so amazed at what they saw and heard, that they appear perfectly stupefied, and gave little or no account. Others are come into other ports so horribly frighted that they scarce retain their senses; other give confused accounts, and so, more or less distinct, as they were nearer or farther from the place; the sum of what may be gathered from them all is this:

That they saw in the night that terrible flash of fire, and after that they heard innumerable clashes of thunder—some say it was thunder they heard—others that it was cannon—only that the noise was a thousand times as loud as thunder or cannon, considering that it appeared to be at a great distance from them.

That the next morning, when the day began to break, the air looked dismally, viz., all overhead was a deep, impenetrable darkness; but below, all round the edge of the horizon, it looked as if the heavens were all on fire. As the day came on, still the darkness increased, till it was far darker than it had been in any part of the night before; and, as they thought, the cloud descended upon them. The darkness still increased after this, viz., in the afternoon they were surprised with the falling of something upon them as thick as smoke, but fine as dust, and yet solid as sand; this fell thicker and faster as they were nearer or farther off—some ships had it nine inches, other a foot thick, upon their decks; the island of Martinico is covered with it at about seven to nine inches thick; at Barbadoes it is frightful, even to St. Christopher's it exceeded four inches; it is fallen over the whole extent of the Isle of Hispaniola, and there is no doubt but it has been seen on the continent of New Spain, about the point of Guiana, or the mouth of the Orinoco; all of which will perhaps be accounted for in some measure in the following narrative.

This continued falling for two or three days and nights successively; and it was impossible for any man to find out or so much as guess at the meaning of it, or of any natural cause to produce it, till the whole came to discover itself; but all people stood amazed at the cause, and several letters were sent to England of it, from Barbadoes in particular; as of a strange miraculous shower of sand, of which we gave an account in our journal of the 20th past. The first news that was given of the whole thing was by some vessels that were under sail, in the night of the 26th, belonging to Martinico, by which we had the following particulars: that on the said 26th, about midnight, the whole island of St. Vincent rose up into the air, with a most dreadful eruption of fire from underneath the earth and an inconceivable noise in the air at its rising up; that it was not only blown up, but blown out of the very sea, with a dreadful force, as it were torn up by the roots, or blown up from the foundations of the earth.

That the terror was inexpressible, and cannot be represented by words; that the noise of the bursting of the earth at first is not possible to be described; that the force of the blow or blast was such, and the whole body of the island was raised so furiously, that the earth was entirely separated into small particles like dust; and as it rose to an immense height, so it spread itself to an incredible distance, and fell light and gradually, like a small but thick mist. This part, we suppose, must be occasioned by the force of the blow effectually sepa-

rating the parts, otherwise they would have fallen with a violence of motion, proportioned to the weight of the whole, the particles pressing one another; whereas now every grain was loose and independent in the air, and fell no faster than it was pressed by its own weight, as in a shower of snow or rain.

The more solid parts of this land, which were lifted up by this blast, and supposed to be of stone, slate, or clay, or such solid matter as would not dissipate or separate in the air, like the rest, being lifted to an immense height, and then plunging, by a mighty force, received by their own weight, into the sea, must of necessity make a noise or blow equal to that of the loudest cannon, and perhaps to thunder itself; and these we think to be the several reports or blows which were heard even to St. Christopher's Island (which is a vast distance from that of St. Vincent), and of which the people in these islands, as well as in the ships, heard about a thousand or twelve hundred distinct blows or reports, and supposed it to be the noise of guns.

As soon as it was understood by the inhabitants in other islands what it was, that is to say, that it was an eruption of the earth at the island of St. Vincent or thereabouts, sloops, barks, and other small vessels came from all parts to see how it was, to inquire into the damage suffered, and to get an account of the particulars; but how astonished must these inquirers be when, meeting from all parts upon the same errand, they may be supposed to go cruising about to find the island, some examining their books to cast up the length they had sailed, some blaming their own negligence for not keeping a right reckoning, some their men for mistaking their distance, others taking observations to know the latitude they were in; at last, all concluding, as it really was, to their great confusion, that the said island was *no more;* that there appeared no remains, except three little rocks, no, not any tokens that such an island had been there; but that, on the contrary, in the place of it, the sea was excessive deep, and no bottom to be found at two hundred fathom.

As this is an event so wonderful as no history can give us an account of the like, so it cannot be unpleasant to our readers to consider briefly some natural causes which may be assigned for it.

An earthquake it cannot be—though that is the first thing which offers to our view. Had the island sunk into the water, it had been well enough accounted for in that way; nor are we without examples in history, when earthquakes have raised islands where they had not been seen before, as particularly in the Archipelago, and sunk islands which have been, so that they have been seen no more, as is said of the great island Atlantis, from which some fancy the Atlantic Ocean received its name.

But for an island to be blown up into the air as if it were undermined and blown up by gunpowder, like a bastion in a town besieged,

and for the force to be such as to blow up the solid earth into the third region, as we may say—to such a stupendous, prodigious height as to have it go up an island, and come down in sand; to go up in bulk, and come down in atoms; to go up perpendicular, and be spread about to a hundred miles' distance—this is unaccountable but by some force superior to that of ten millions of barrels of gunpowder.

Some, we hear, by casting up the dimensions of the island, to reduce it to cubical inches, are pretending to tell us what weight of earth this blast has raised up, and consequently would tell us what force it was that must raise it; but this is a perfectly needless inquiry, and many ways impracticable also.

But it may not be an unfruitful search if we endeavour to inquire, and offer some probable essay at the manner, how such a wonderful thing as this is in Nature has been, or may be, performed. There seems to be only two several ways for us to conceive of the possibility of such a thing—we mean, by the ordinary course of Nature, and concurrence of causes.

What infinite Power, who made the world, may be supposed to do, we have nothing to say to, nor is it to our purpose in this case to inquire into it.

Infinite Power might as easily blow this whole earth up and dissipate every part of it into the first atoms, from which it may be supposed to have been made, as He could, by the power of His word, form this beautiful figure from the unshaped chaos; but this, we say, is out of the present question.

Our inquiry is into natural and probable causes which might produce such a terrible eruption in Nature as this has been, the like whereof was never heard of before.

First, a concurrence or conjunction of sulphureous and nitrous particles in the subterranean caverns of the earth, of which some might happen to be under this island, of a vast extent, according to the quantity of which particles the force would be; and there's no question but that these particles taking air, by some chasm or vent given to them by some accident of an earthquake or otherwise, might be able to perform this terrible operation.

As to the nature of an earthquake, it is needless to enter into inquiries here of a thing so well known, or to prove that this might open the hollows and vast caverns in the bowels of the earth, at a great depth, perhaps many hundred fathoms under the bottom of the sea; for as an earthquake effects a dislocation of the parts, it is most natural to suppose it might so open those subterranean hollows, so as to bring air to those particles which were before big with that contracted fire, which, when dilated, would blow up all above them.

The second method in Nature by which this may be supposed to be performed, might be subterranean fires, which, having kindled them-

selves in the body of the earth, do, in several places, extend themselves to a prodigious space, and often discover to us, more or less, as their magnitude or distance from the surface of the earth may be, sometimes by warming the springs of water which flow near them (from whence our hot baths and warm springs of water are produced), other times by volcanoes or burning mountains, as Mount Gibell or Etna, in Sicily; Mount Vesuvius, near Naples; and Strombolo; Mount Hecla, in Iceland, and the like.

Supposing, then, by the shocks of an earthquake near the cavities where these treasures of fire are reserved, the earth may be opened so as that the sea might come pouring into the vast body of fire, which we may imagine to be kindled there, and which may have burned several hundred years—this, having no vent, would not fail to blow up, not such an island as St. Vincent only, but an island forty times as big in proportion to the extent of the fire below, and to the quantity of water which might come in; and this we believe is the only way we can account for the dreadful eruptions which sometimes happen in those burning mountains mentioned above, and of which we have not room to enlarge here.

The experiment of this may be made familiar by the throwing a pail of water hastily into a furnace—suppose such as a brewer's furnace—which will immediately burst out again, with a violence proportioned to the quantity of water; and, if it were possible, at the same time, to shut the door of the furnace, the force of it would blow up all above it. This also may be illustrated, with great exactness to our imagination, by reflecting on a very sad accident which happened not many years ago in London, and which most people have heard of, viz., at the foundry at Windmill Hill, by Moorfields, where the metal for the casting of a great gun, running into a mould ill prepared, and which had received some water, though by the relation of all concerned in it, and that were alive, that water, by the cavity of the mould, could not be equal to a gallon, yet it blew up the whole work, and blew the melted metal up, as light as if it had been the lightest earth, throwing it about the whole place, separated in small parts like drops, so that it overwhelmed, as with a shower of molten brass, those that were near, and almost all who were in the place were either killed or terribly hurt with it.

We have not room to say any more of this affair in this paper: we shall only add, that as by either of these two ways this terrible event of blowing up the island of St. Vincent may be supposed possible in Nature, so we do believe that all the philosophers in the world cannot find a third.

* * *

JOSEPH ADDISON

THE writer who rose to be Chief Secretary of State and married a countess must remain as an outstanding example of the successful man of letters. The reader who desires to get an accurate and life-like impression of the manner of man Addison was cannot do better than turn to the account of him which Thackeray gives in *Esmond*. For the present it is sufficient to say that although Addison, who was born in 1672, achieved immediate fame as a poet, it is as an essayist that he is now remembered. He used his influence most honourably in endeavouring, through the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, to bring about a better understanding between opposing factions, to create a more harmonious feeling between country and town, to awaken sympathy, and to promote good humour. In all this he very largely succeeded, aided by his old friend Steele, and the influence of his writing is incalculable. The *Spectator*, as we have seen, had direct imitators in various continental countries, but Addison's ease and urbanity have never been surpassed. As Dr. Johnson said, his style was "familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious." Addison died in 1719.

Of the following essays the first two are taken from the *Spectator*, and the third from the *Tatler*.

I. OF LAUGHTER

Γ'ελως ἄκαιρος ἐν βροτοῖς δεινὸν κακὸν
Frag. Vet. Poet.
Mirth out of season is a grievous ill.

WHEN I make choice of a subject that has not been treated on by others, I throw together my reflections on it without any order or method, so that they may appear rather in the looseness and freedom of an essay, than in the regularity of a set discourse. It is after this manner that I shall consider laughter and ridicule in my present paper.

Man is the merriest species of the creation, all above and below him are serious. He sees things in a different light from other beings, and finds his mirth arising from objects that perhaps cause something like pity or displeasure in higher natures. Laughter is indeed a very good counterpoise to the spleen; and it seems but reasonable that we should be capable of receiving joy from what is no real good to us, since we can receive grief from what is no real evil.

I have in my Forty-seventh Paper raised a speculation on the notion of a modern philosopher, who describes the first motive of laughter to be a secret comparison which we make between ourselves, and

the persons we laugh at; or, in other words, that satisfaction which we receive from the opinion of some pre-eminence in ourselves, when we see the absurdities of another or when we reflect on any past absurdities of our own. This seems to hold in most cases, and we may observe that the vainest part of mankind are the most addicted to this passion.

I have read a sermon of a conventual in the Church of Rome on those words of the Wise Man, "I said of Laughter, it is mad; and of Mirth, what does it?" Upon which he laid it down as a point of doctrine, that laughter was the effect of Original Sin, and that Adam could not laugh before the Fall.

Laughter, while it lasts, slackens and unbraces the mind, weakens the faculties, and causes a kind of remissness and dissolution in all the powers of the soul: and thus far it may be looked upon as a weakness in the composition of human nature. But if we consider the frequent reliefs we receive from it, and how often it breaks the gloom which is apt to depress the mind and damp our spirits, with transient unexpected gleams of joy, one would take care not to grow too wise for so great a pleasure of life.

The talent of turning men into ridicule, and exposing to laughter those one converses with, is the qualification of little ungenerous tempers. A young man with this cast of mind cuts himself off from all manner of improvement. Every one has his flaws and weaknesses; nay, the greatest blemishes are often found in the most shining characters; but what an absurd thing is it to pass over all the valuable parts of a man, and fix our attention on his infirmities? to observe his imperfections more than his virtues; and to make use of him for the sport of others, rather than for our own improvement?

We therefore very often find, that persons the most accomplished in ridicule are those who are very shrewd at hitting a blot, without exerting anything masterly in themselves. As there are many eminent critics who never writ a good line, there are many admirable buffoons that animadvert upon every single defect in another, without ever discovering the least beauty of their own. By this means, these unlucky little wits often gain reputation in the esteem of vulgar minds, and raise themselves above persons of much more laudable characters.

If the talent of ridicule were employed to laugh men out of vice and folly, it might be of some use to the world; but instead of this, we find that it is generally made use of to laugh men out of virtue and good sense, by attacking every thing that is solemn and serious, decent and praiseworthy in human life.

We may observe, that in the first ages of the world, when the great souls and master-pieces of human nature were produced, men shined by a noble simplicity of behaviour, and were strangers to those little embellishments which are so fashionable in our present conversation.

And it is very remarkable, that notwithstanding we fall short at present of the Ancients in poetry, painting, oratory, history, architecture, and all the noble arts and sciences which depend more upon genius than experience, we exceed them as much in doggerel, humour, burlesque, and all the trivial arts of ridicule. We meet with more raillery among the Moderns, but more good sense among the Ancients.

The two great branches of ridicule in writing are comedy and burlesque. The first ridicules persons by drawing them in their proper characters, the other by drawing them quite unlike themselves. Burlesque is therefore of two kinds; the first represents mean persons in the accoutrements of heroes, the other describes great persons acting and speaking like the basest among the people. Don Quixote is an instance of the first, and Lucian's gods of the second. It is a dispute among the critics, whether burlesque poetry runs best in heroic verse, like that of the *Dispensary;* or in doggerel, like that of *Hudibras*. I think where the low character is to be raised, the heroic is the proper measure; but when an hero is to be pulled down and degraded, it is done best in doggerel.

If *Hudibras* had been set out with as much wit and humour in heroic verse as he is in doggerel, he would have made a much more agreeable figure than he does; though the generality of his readers are so wonderfully pleased with the double rhymes, that I do not expect many will be of my opinion in this particular.

I shall conclude this essay upon laughter with observing that the metaphor of laughing, applied to fields and meadows when they are in flower, or to trees when they are in blossom, runs through all languages; which I have not observed of any other metaphor, excepting that of Fire and Burning when they are applied to Love. This shews that we naturally regard laughter, as what is in itself both amiable and beautiful. For this Reason likewise Venus has gained the Title of [Φιλομείδης,] the Laughter-loving Dame, as Waller has translated it, and is represented by Horace as the goddess who delights in laughter. Milton, in a joyous assembly of imaginary persons, has given us a very poetical figure of laughter. His whole band of mirth is so finely described, that I shall set down the passage at length.

> But come thou goddess fair and free,
> In Heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
> And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
> Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
> With two sister Graces more,
> To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
> Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
> Jest and youthful Jollity,
> Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
> Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek:
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light, fantastic toe:
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free.

II. SIR ROGER AT HOME

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please; dine at his own table or in my chambers, as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shews me at a distance: as I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons: for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet-de-chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenance of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture

of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

I have observed in several of my papers that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humorist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common or ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned; and, without staying for my answer, told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper: and, if possible, a man that understood a little of back-gammon. "My friend," says Sir Roger, "found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not shew it: I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them; if any dispute arises they apply themselves to

him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity."

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night) told us the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then shewed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

III. TULIPS

Scriptorum chorus omnis amat renus, et fugit urbes.
HOR., *Epist.*, ii, 2, 77

The tribe of writers, to a man, admire
The peaceful grove, and from the town retire.
FRANCIS

From my own apartment, Aug. 30

I CHANCED to rise very early one particular morning this summer, and took a walk into the country to divert myself among the fields and meadows, while the green was new, and the flowers in their bloom. As at this season of the year every lane is a beautiful walk, and every hedge full of nosegays, I lost myself, with a great deal of pleasure, among several thickets and bushes that were filled with a great variety

of birds, and an agreeable confusion of notes, which formed the pleasantest scene in the world to one who had passed a whole winter in noise and smoke. The freshness of the dews that lay upon everything about me, with the cool breath of the morning, which inspired the birds with so many delightful instincts, created in me the same kind of animal pleasure, and made my heart overflow with such secret emotions of joy and satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for. On this occasion I could not but reflect upon a beautiful simile in Milton:

> As one who long in populous city pent,
> Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
> Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breath
> Among the pleasant villages and farms
> Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceived delight:
> The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
> Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound.

Those who are conversant in the writings of polite authors receive an additional entertainment from the country, as it revives in their memories those charming descriptions, with which such authors do frequently abound.

I was thinking of the foregoing beautiful simile in Milton, and applying it to myself, when I observed to the windward of me a black cloud falling to the earth in long trails of rain, which made me betake myself for shelter to a house I saw at a little distance from the place where I was walking. As I sat in the porch, I heard the voices of two or three persons, who seemed very earnest in discourse. My curiosity was raised when I heard the names of Alexander the Great and Artaxerxes; and as their talk seemed to run on ancient heroes, I concluded there could not be any secret in it; for which reason I thought I might very fairly listen to what they said.

After several parallels between great men, which appeared to me altogether groundless and chimerical, I was surprised to hear one say, that he valued the Black Prince more than the Duke of Vendosme. How the Duke of Vendosme should become a rival of the Black Prince, I could not conceive: and was more startled when I heard a second affirm, with great vehemence, that if the Emperor of Germany was not going off, he should like him better than either of them. He added, that though the season was so changeable, the Duke of Marlborough was in blooming beauty. I was wondering to myself from whence they had received this odd intelligence: especially when I heard them mention the names of several other great generals, as the Prince of Hesse and the King of Sweden, who, they said, were both running away. To which they added, what I entirely agreed with them in, that the Crown of France was very weak, but that the Marshal Villars still kept his colours. At last, one of them told the company, if they

would go along with him, he would show them a chimney-sweeper and a painted lady in the same bed, which he was sure would very much please them. The shower which had driven them as well as myself into the house, was now over; and as they were passing by me into the garden, I asked them to let me be one of their company.

The gentleman of the house told me, "if I delighted in flowers, it would be worth my while; for that he believed he could show me such a blow of tulips as was not to be matched in the whole country."

I accepted the offer, and immediately found that they had been talking in terms of gardening, and that the kings and generals they had mentioned were only so many tulips, to which the gardeners, according to their usual custom, had given such high titles and appellations of honour.

I was very much pleased and astonished at the glorious show of these gay vegetables, that arose in great profusion on all the banks about us. Sometimes I considered every leaf as an elaborate piece of tissue, in which the threads and fibres were woven together into different configurations, which gave a different colouring to the light as it glanced on the several parts of the surface. Sometimes I considered the whole bed of tulips, according to the notion of the greatest mathematician and philosopher that ever lived, as a multitude of optic instruments, designed for the separating light into all those various colours of which it is composed.

I was awakened out of these my philosophical speculations, by observing the company often seemed to laugh at me. I accidentally praised a tulip as one of the finest I ever saw; upon which they told me, it was a common Fool's Coat. Upon that I praised another, which it seems was but another kind of Fool's Coat.

I had the same fate with two or three more, for which reason I desired the owner of the garden to let me know which were the finest of the flowers; for that I was so unskilful in the art, that I thought the most beautiful were the most valuable, and that those which had the gayest colours were the most beautiful. The gentleman smiled at my ignorance. He seemed a very plain honest man, and a person of good sense, had not his head been touched with that distemper which Hippocrates calls the Tulippomania; insomuch that he would talk very rationally on any subject in the world but a tulip.

He told me, "that he valued the bed of flowers which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred acres of land in England," and added, "that it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish cook-maid of his had not almost ruined him the last winter, by mistaking a handful of tulip roots for a heap of onions, and by that means," says he, "made me a dish of pottage that cost me above a thousand pounds sterling." He then showed me what he thought the finest of his tulips,

which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great fortunes, which are not always the greatest beauties.

I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical tastes, nor esteemed anything the more for its being uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason I look upon the whole country in springtime as a spacious garden, and make as many visits to a spot of daisies or a bank of violets, as a florist does to his borders or parterres. There is not a bush in blossom within a mile of me, which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind through several fields and meadows with an unspeakable pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful objects the most ordinary and most common.

* * *

RICHARD STEELE

The son of a Dublin attorney, Steele was born in 1672. He was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, and enlisted in the Guards without taking a degree. He soon became captain, and wrote, in the midst of all his dissipations, *The Christian Hero*, with the idea, as he said, of leaving upon his own mind a deep impression of virtue and religion to counteract other tendencies which were all too strong. Addison helped him in writing a comedy entitled *The Tender Husband*, and from that time on they were in close association. First in the *Tatler* and then, more notably, in the *Spectator*, the two collaborated and produced the essays which have had such a remarkable influence upon their own and succeeding generations. Steele supplied the initiative and the ideas while his friend added the balance and the genius for delicate craftsmanship needed to carry the project through successfully. Steele entered parliament and was knighted, but to the end he could never keep out of debt. He died in 1729. The following essays are from the *Spectator*.

I. A PRIZE FIGHT

BEING a person of insatiable curiosity, I could not forbear going on Wednesday last to a place of no small renown for the gallantry of the lower order of Britons, namely, to the Bear-Garden at Hockley in the Hole; where (as a whitish brown paper, put into my hands in the street, informed me) there was to be a trial of skill to be exhibited between two masters of the noble science of defence, at two of the

clock precisely. I was not a little charmed with the solemnity of the challenge, which ran thus:

> I, James Miller, Serjeant, (lately come from the frontiers of Portugal), Master of the Noble Science of Defence, hearing in most places where I have been of the great fame of Timothy Buck of London, Master of the said Science, do invite him to meet me, and exercise at the several weapons following, viz.
>
> Back-Sword, Single Falchion,
> Sword and Dagger, Case of Falchions,
> Sword and Buckler, Quarter-staff.

If the generous ardour in James Miller to dispute the reputation of Timothy Buck, had something resembling the old heroes of romance, Timothy Buck returned answer in the same paper with the like spirit, adding a little indignation at being challenged, and seeming to condescend to fight James Miller, not in regard to Miller himself, but in that, as the fame went out, he had fought Parkes of Coventry. The acceptance of the combat ran in these words:

> I, Timothy Buck of Clare-Market, Master of the Noble Science of Defence, hearing he did fight Mr. Parkes of Coventry, will not fail (God willing) to meet this fair inviter at the time and place appointed, desiring a clear stage and no favour.
>
> *Vivat Regina*

I shall not here look back on the spectacles of the Greeks and Romans of this kind, but must believe this custom took its rise from the ages of knight-errantry; from those who loved one woman so well, that they hated all men and women else; from those who would fight you, whether you were or were not of their mind; from those who demanded the combat of their contemporaries, both for admiring their mistress or discommending her. I cannot therefore but lament, that the terrible part of the ancient fight is preserved, when the amorous side of it is forgotten. We have retained the barbarity, but lost the gallantry of the old combatants. I could wish, methinks, these gentlemen had consulted me in the promulgation of the conflict. I was obliged by a fair young maid whom I understood to be called Elizabeth Preston, daughter of the Keeper of the Garden, with a glass of water; whom I imagined might have been, for form's sake, the general representative of the lady fought for, and from her beauty the proper Amarillis on these occasions. It would have ran better in the challenge: "I James Miller, Serjeant, who have travelled parts abroad, and came last from the frontiers of Portugal, for the love of Elizabeth Preston, do assert that the said Elizabeth is the fairest of women." Then the answer: "I Timothy Buck, who have stayed in Great Britain during all the war in foreign parts for the sake of Susanna Page, do deny that Elizabeth

Preston is so fair as the said Susanna Page. Let Susanna Page look on, and I desire of James Miller no favour."

This would give the battle quite another turn; and a proper station for the ladies, whose complexion was disputed by the sword, would animate the disputants with a more gallant incentive than the expectation of money from the spectators; though I would not have that neglected, but thrown to that fair one whose lover was approved by the donor.

Yet, considering the thing wants such amendments, it was carried with great order. James Miller came on first; preceded by two disabled drummers, to show, I suppose, that the prospect of maimed bodies did not in the least deter him. There ascended with the daring Miller a gentleman, whose name I could not learn, with a dogged air, as unsatisfied that he was not principal. This son of anger lowered at the whole assembly, and weighing himself as he marched around from side to side, with a stiff knee and shoulder, he gave intimations of the purpose he smothered till he saw the issue of this encounter. Miller had a blue ribband tied round the sword-arm; which ornament I conceive to be the remain of that custom of wearing a mistress's favour on such occasions of old.

Miller is a man of six foot eight inches height, of a kind but bold aspect, well-fashioned, and ready of his limbs; and such readiness as spoke his ease in them, was obtained from a habit of motion in military exercise.

The expectation of the spectators was now almost at its height, and the crowd pressing in, several active persons thought they were placed rather according to their fortune, than their merit, and took it in their heads to prefer themselves from the open area, or pit, to the galleries. This dispute between desert and property brought many to the ground, and raised others in proportion to the highest seats by turns for the space of ten minutes, till Timothy Buck came on, and the whole assembly giving up their disputes, turned their eyes upon the champions. Then it was that every man's affection turned to one or the other irresistibly. A judicious gentleman near me said, "I could, methinks, be Miller's second, but I had rather have Buck for mine." Miller had an audacious look, that took the eye; Buck a perfect composure, that engaged the judgment. Buck came on in a plain coat, and kept all his air till the instant of engaging; at which time he undressed to his shirt, his arm adorned with a bandage of red ribband. No one can describe the sudden concern in the whole assembly; the most tumultuous crowd in nature was as still and as much engaged, as if all their lives depended on the first blow. The combatants met in the middle of the stage, and shaking hands as removing all malice, they retired with much grace to the extremities of it; from whence they immediately faced about, and approached each other. Miller with an

heart full of resolution, Buck with a watchful untroubled countenance; Buck regarding principally his own defence, Miller chiefly thoughtful of annoying his opponent. It is not easy to describe the many escapes and imperceptible defences between two men of quick eyes and ready limbs; but Miller's heat laid him open to the rebuke of the calm Buck, by a large cut on the forehead. Much effusion of blood covered his eyes in a moment, and the huzzas of the crowd undoubtedly quickened the anguish. The assembly was divided into parties upon their different ways of fighting; while a poor nymph in one of the galleries apparently suffered for Miller, and burst into a flood of tears. As soon as his wound was wrapped up, he came on again with a little rage, which still disabled him further. But what brave man can be wounded into more patience and caution? The next was a warm eager onset which ended in a decisive stroke on the left leg of Miller. The lady in the gallery, during this second strife, covered her face; and for my part, I could not keep my thoughts from being mostly employed on the consideration of her unhappy circumstances that moment, hearing the clash of swords, and apprehending life or victory concerned her lover in every blow, but not daring to satisfy herself on whom they fell. The wound was exposed to the view of all who could delight in it, and sewed up on the stage. The surly second of Miller declared at this time, that he would that day fortnight fight Mr. Buck at the same weapons, declaring himself the master of the renowned Gorman; but Buck denied him the honour of that courageous disciple, and asserting that he himself had taught that champion, accepted the challenge.

There is something in nature very unaccountable on such occasions, when we see the people take a certain painful gratification in beholding these encounters. Is it cruelty that administers this sort of delight? or is it a pleasure which is taken in the exercise of pity? It was methought pretty remarkable, that the business of the day being a trial of skill, the popularity did not run so high as one would have expected on the side of Buck. Is it that people's passions have their rise in self-love, and thought themselves (in spite of all the courage they had) liable to the fate of Miller, but could not so easily think themselves qualified like Buck?

Tully speaks of this custom with less horror than one would expect, though he confesses it was much abused in his time, and seems directly to approve of it under its first regulations, when criminals only fought before the people. *Crudele Gladiatorum spectaculum & inhumanum nonnullis videri solet; & haud scio annon ita sit ut nunc fit; cum vero sontes ferro depugnabant, auribus fortasse multa, oculis quidem nulla, poterat esse fortior contra dolorem & mortem disciplina.* (The shows of gladiators may be thought barbarous and inhumane, and I know not but it is so as it is now practised; but in those times when only criminals were combatants, the ear perhaps might receive many better

instructions, but it is impossible that any thing which affects our eyes, should fortify us so well against pain and death.)

II. OF FLATTERY

Nequicquam populo bibulas donaveris Aures;
Respue quod non es ——

PERSIUS, Sat. 4.

No more to flattering crowds thine ear incline,
Eager to drink the praise which is not thine.

BREWSTER

AMONG all the diseases of the mind, there is not one more epidemical or more pernicious than the love of flattery. For as where the juices of the body are prepared to receive a malignant influence, there the disease rages with the most violence; so in this distemper of the mind, where there is ever a propensity and inclination to suck in the poison, it cannot be but that the whole order of reasonable action must be overturned, for, like music, it

—— So softens and disarms the mind,
That not one arrow can resistance find.

First we flatter ourselves, and then the flattery of others is sure of success. It awakens our self-love within, a party which is ever ready to revolt from our better judgment, and join the enemy without. Hence it is, that the profusion of favours we so often see poured upon the parasite, are represented to us, by our self-love, as justice done to man, who so agreeably reconciles us to ourselves. When we are overcome by such soft insinuations and ensnaring compliances, we gladly recompense the artifices that are made use of to blind our reason, and which triumph over the weaknesses of our temper and inclinations.

But were every man persuaded from how mean and low a principle this passion is derived, there can be no doubt but the person who should attempt to gratify it, would then be as contemptible as he is now successful. 'Tis the desire of some quality we are not possessed of, or inclination to be something we are not, which are the causes of our giving ourselves up to that man, who bestows upon us the characters and qualities of others; which perhaps suit us as ill and were as little designed for our wearing, as their clothes. Instead of going out of our own complexional nature into that of others, 'twere a better and more laudable industry to improve our own, and instead of a miserable copy become a good original; for there is no temper, no disposition so rude and untractable, but may in its own peculiar cast and turn be brought to some agreeable use in conversation, or in the affairs of life.

A person of a rougher deportment, and less tied up to the usual ceremonies of behaviour, will, like Manly in the play, please by the grace which nature gives to every action wherein she is complied with; the brisk and lively will not want their admirers, and even a more reserved and melancholy temper may at some times be agreeable.

When there is not vanity enough awake in a man to undo him, the flatterer stirs up that dormant weakness, and inspires him with merit enough to be a coxcomb. But if flattery be the most sordid act that can be complied with, the art of praising justly is as commendable: for 'tis laudable to praise well; as poets at one and the same time give immortality, and receive it themselves for a reward: both are pleased, the one whilst he receives the recompense of merit, the other whilst he shows he knows how to discern it; but above all, that man is happy in this art, who, like a skilful painter, retains the features and complexion, but still softens the picture into the most agreeable likeness.

There can hardly, I believe, be imagined a more desirable pleasure, than that of praise unmixed with any possibility of flattery. Such was that which Germanicus enjoyed, when, the night before a battle, desirous of some sincere mark of the esteem of his legions for him, he is described by Tacitus listening in a disguise to the discourse of a soldier, and wrapt up in the fruition of his glory, whilst with an undesigned sincerity they praised his noble and majestic mien, his affability, his valour, conduct, and success in war. How must a man have his heart full-blown with joy in such an article of glory as this? What a spur and encouragement still to proceed in those steps which had already brought him to so pure a taste of the greatest of mortal enjoyments?

It sometimes happens, that even enemies and envious persons bestow the sincerest marks of esteem when they least design it. Such afford a greater pleasure, as extorted by merit, and freed from all suspicion of favour or flattery. Thus it is with Malvolio; he has wit, learning, and discernment, but tempered with an alloy of envy, self-love and detraction: Malvolio turns pale at the mirth and good humour of the company, if it centre not in his person; he grows jealous and displeased when he ceases to be the only person admired, and looks upon the commendations paid to another as a detraction from his merit, and an attempt to lessen the superiority he affects; but by this very method, he bestows such praise as can never be suspected of flattery. His uneasiness and distastes are so many sure and certain signs of another's title to that glory he desires, and has the mortification to find himself not possessed of.

A good name is fitly compared to a precious ointment, and when we are praised with skill and decency, 'tis indeed the most agreeable perfume, but if too strongly admitted into a brain of a less vigorous and happy texture, 'twill, like too strong an odour, overcome the senses, and prove pernicious to those nerves 'twas intended to refresh. A gen-

erous mind is of all others the most sensible of praise and dispraise; and a noble spirit is as much invigorated with its due proportion of honour and applause, as 'tis depressed by neglect and contempt: but 'tis only persons far above the common level who are thus affected with either of these extremes; as in a thermometer, 'tis only the purest and most sublimated spirit that is either contracted or dilated by the benignity or inclemency of the season.

Mr. Spectator,

The translations which you have lately given us from the Greek, in some of your last Papers, have been the occasion of my looking into some of those authors; among whom I chanced on a collection of letters which pass under the name of Aristænetus. Of all the remains of antiquity, I believe there can be nothing produc'd of an air so gallant and polite; each letter contains a little novel or adventure, which is told with all the beauties of language and heightened with a luxuriance of wit. There are several of them translated, but with such wide deviations from the original, and in a style so far differing from the authors, that the translator seems rather to have taken hints for the expressing his own sense and thoughts, than to have endeavoured to render those of *Aristænetus*. In the following translation, I have kept as near the meaning of the Greek as I could, and have only added a few words to make the sentences in English fit together a little better than they would otherwise have done. The story seems to be taken from that of Pygmalion and the Statue in Ovid: Some of the thoughts are of the same turn, and the whole is written in a kind of poetical prose.

Philopinax to *Chromation*

"Never was man more overcome with so fantastical a passion as mine. I have painted a beautiful woman, and am despairing, dying for the picture. My own skill has undone me; 'tis not the dart of Venus, but my own pencil has thus wounded me. Ah me! with what anxiety am I necessitated to adore my own idol? How miserable am I, whilst every one must as much pity the painter as he praises the picture, and own my torment more than equal to my art. But why do I thus complain? Have there not been more unhappy and unnatural passions than mine? Yes, I have seen the representations of Phædra, Narcissus, and Pasiphae. Phædra was unhappy in her Love; That of Pasiphae was monstrous; and whilst the other caught at his beloved likeness, he destroyed the watery image, which ever eluded his embraces. The fountain represented Narcissus to himself, and the picture both that and him, thirsting after his adored image. But I am yet less unhappy, I enjoy her Presence continually, and if I touch her, I destroy not the beauteous form, but she looks pleased, and a sweet smile sits in the charming space which divides her lips. One would swear that voice and speech were issuing out, and that one's ears felt the melodious sound. How often have I, deceived by a lover's credulity, hearkened if she had not something to whisper me? and when frustrated of my hopes, how often have I taken my revenge in kisses from her cheeks and eyes, and softly wooed her to my embrace, whilst she (as to me it seem'd) only withheld her tongue the more to inflame me.

But, madman that I am, shall I be thus taken with the representation only of a beauteous face, and flowing hair, and thus waste myself and melt to tears for a shadow? Ah, sure 'tis something more, 'tis a reality! for see her beauties shine out with new lustre, and she seems to upbraid me with such unkind reproaches. Oh may I have a living mistress of this form, that when I shall compare the work of nature with that of art, I may be still at a loss which to choose, and be long perplexed with the pleasing uncertainty."

* * *

JONATHAN SWIFT

SWIFT was born in 1667 and was, like Steele, a native of Dublin. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and afterward became secretary to Sir William Temple, who gave him some very important tasks to do. He wrote political pamphlets, first on the Whig side and then on that of the Tories, but for preferment he had to be content with the deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and consequent exile from the circle of London wits and politicians which was so dear to him. His most notable works are the satires *A Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*. The main quality of his work is its clearness. "Force and clearness can no further go than in Swift's prose from 1708 to 1728." He had nothing of Addison's urbanity or Steele's good humour. He knew what he meant to say, and he said it in the plainest possible terms without regard to anyone's feelings. After a long and painful illness he died in 1745.

A MEDITATION UPON A BROOMSTICK

THIS single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest; it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk; it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make her things clean, and be nasty itself; at length, worn out to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use of kindling a fire. When I beheld this, I sighed, and said within myself: Surely mortal man is a broomstick! nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural

bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellences, and other men's defaults!

But a broomstick, perhaps you will say, is an emblem of a tree standing on its head: and pray, what is man but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be—grovelling on the earth! and yet, with all his faults, he sets up to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances; rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away. His last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving; till, worn to the stumps, like his brother-besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

* * *

HENRY FIELDING

Fielding was born in Somerset in 1707, and was educated at Eton. For a living he had only himself to depend upon and being "proffered the choice to turn hackney-coachman or hackney-writer," he chose the latter. He wrote many plays and some essays before he produced *Joseph Andrews*, a burlesque of Richardson's *Pamela*. This he followed by *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*. His success as delineator of character has tended to obscure his qualities as an essayist. These are not only evident in his essays proper, such as the one which is given here, but also in those delightful essays in which he turns aside, now and again, to talk delightfully to the readers of his novels. Fielding died at Lisbon in 1754, and the *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* appeared in the following year.

ON NOTHING

THE INTRODUCTION

IT IS surprising that, while such trifling matters employ the masterly pens of the present age, the great and noble subject of this essay should have passed totally neglected; and the rather, as it is a subject to which the genius of many of those writers who have unsuccessfully applied themselves to politics, religion, etc., is most peculiarly adapted.

Perhaps their unwillingness to handle what is of such importance may not improperly be ascribed to their modesty; though they may not be remarkably addicted to this vice on every occasion. Indeed I have heard it predicated of some, whose assurance in treating other subjects hath been sufficiently notable, that they have blushed at this. For such is the awe with which this Nothing inspires mankind, that I believe it is generally apprehended of many persons of very high character among us, that were title, power, or riches to allure them, they would stick at it.

But, whatever be the reason, certain it is, that except a hardy wit in the reign of Charles II, none ever hath dared to write on this subject: I mean openly and avowedly; for it must be confessed that most of our modern authors, however foreign the matter which they endeavour to treat may seem at their first setting out, they generally bring the work to this in the end. I hope, however, this attempt will not be imputed to me as an act of immodesty; since I am convinced there are many persons in this kingdom who are persuaded of my fitness for what I have undertaken. But as talking of a man's self is generally suspected to arise from vanity, I shall, without any more excuse or preface, proceed to my essay.

SECTION I

On the Antiquity of Nothing

There is nothing falser than that old proverb which (like many other falsehoods) is in every one's mouth:

Ex nihilo nihil fit.

Thus translated by Shakespeare, in *Lear:*

Nothing can come of nothing.

Whereas, in fact, from Nothing proceeds everything. And this is a truth confessed by the philosophers of all sects: the only point in controversy between them being, whether Something made the world out of Nothing, or Nothing out of Something. A matter not much worth debating at present, since either will equally serve our turn. Indeed the wits of all ages seem to have ranged themselves on each side of this question, as their genius tended more or less to the spiritual or material substance. For those of the more spiritual species have inclined to the former, and those whose genius hath partaken more of the chief properties of matter, such as solidity, thickness, etc., have embraced the latter.

But whether Nothing was the *artifex* or *materies* only, it is plain in

either case, it will have a right to claim to itself the origination of all things.

And farther, the great antiquity of Nothing is apparent from its being so visible in the account we have of the beginning of every nation. This is very plainly to be discovered in the first pages, and sometimes books, of all general historians; and, indeed, the study of this important subject fills up the whole life of an antiquary, it being always at the bottom of his inquiry, and is commonly at last discovered by him with infinite labour and pains.

SECTION II

Of the Nature of Nothing

Another falsehood which we must detect in the pursuit of this essay is an assertion, "That no one can have an idea on Nothing": but men who thus confidently deny us this idea either grossly deceive themselves, or would impose a downright cheat on the world: for, so far from having none, I believe there are few who have not many ideas of it; though perhaps they may mistake them for the idea of Something.

For instance, is there anyone who hath not an idea of immaterial substance?[1] Now what is immaterial substance, more than Nothing? But here we are artfully deceived by the use of words: for, were we to ask another what idea he had of immaterial matter, or unsubstantial substance, the absurdity of affirming it to be Something would shock him, and he would immediately reply, it was Nothing.

Some persons perhaps will say, "Then we have no idea of it"; but, as I can support the contrary by such undoubted authority, I shall, instead of trying to confute such idle opinions, proceed to show: first, what Nothing is; secondly, I shall disclose the various kinds of Nothing; and, lastly shall prove its great dignity, and that it is the end of everything.

As it is extremely hard to define Nothing in positive terms, I shall therefore do it in negative. Nothing then is not Something. And here I must object to a third error concerning it, which is, that it is in no place; which is an indirect way of depriving it of its existence; whereas indeed it possesses the greatest and noblest place on this earth, viz., the human brain. But indeed this mistake had been sufficiently refuted by many very wise men; who, having spent their whole lives in contemplation and pursuit of Nothing, have at last gravely concluded—*that there is Nothing in this world.*

[1] The Author would not be here understood to speak against the doctrine of immateriality, to which he is a hearty well-wisher; but to point at the stupidity of those who, instead of immaterial *essence*, which would convey a rational meaning, have substituted immaterial *substance*, which is a contradiction in terms.

Farther, as Nothing is not Something, so everything which is not Something is Nothing; and wherever Something is not Nothing is: a very large allowance in its favour, as must appear to persons well skilled in human affairs.

For instance, when a bladder is full of wind, it is full of something; but when that is let out, we aptly say, there is nothing in it.

The same may be as justly asserted of a man as of a bladder. However well he may be bedaubed with lace, or with title, yet, if he have not something in him, we may predicate the same of him as of an empty bladder.

But if we cannot reach an adequate knowledge of the true essence of Nothing, no more than we can of matter, let us, in imitation of the experimental philosophers, examine some of its properties or accidents.

And here we shall see the infinite advantages which Nothing hath over Something; for, while the latter is confined to one sense, or two perhaps at the most, Nothing is the object of them all.

For, first, Nothing may be seen, as is plain from the relation of persons who have recovered from high fevers, and perhaps may be suspected from some (at least) of those who have seen apparitions, both on earth and in the clouds. Nay, I have often heard it confessed by men, when asked what they saw at such a place and time, that they saw Nothing. Admitting then there are two sights, viz., a first and second sight, according to the firm belief of some, Nothing must be allowed to have a very large share of the first, and as to the second, it hath it all entirely to itself.

Secondly, Nothing may be heard, of which the same proofs may be given as of the foregoing. The Argive mentioned by Horace is a strong instance of this:

Fuit haud ignobilis Argis,
Qui se credebat miros audire tragœdos,
In vacuo laetus sessor plausorque theatro.

That Nothing may be tasted and smelt is not only known to persons of delicate palates and nostrils. How commonly do we hear that such a thing smells or tastes of nothing! The latter I have heard asserted of a dish compounded of five or six savoury ingredients. And as to the former, I remember an elderly gentlewoman who had a great antipathy to the smell of apples, who, upon discovering that an idle boy had fastened some mellow apple to her tail, contracted a habit of smelling them whenever that boy came within her sight, though there were then none within a mile of her.

Lastly, feeling: and sure if any sense seems more particularly the object of matter only, which must be allowed to be Something, this doth. Nay, I have heard it asserted, and with a colour of truth, of several persons, that they can feel nothing but a cudgel. Notwith-

standing which, some have felt the motions of the spirit, and others have felt very bitterly the misfortunes of their friends, without endeavouring to relieve them. Now these seem two plain instances that Nothing is an object of this sense. Nay, I have heard a surgeon declare, while he was cutting off a patient's leg, that *he was sure he felt Nothing.*

Nothing is as well the object of our passions as our senses. Thus there are many who love Nothing, some who hate Nothing, and some who fear Nothing, etc.

We have already mentioned three of the properties of a noun to belong to Nothing; we shall find the fourth likewise to be as justly claimed by it, and that Nothing is as often the object of the understanding as of the senses.

Indeed some have imagined that knowledge, with the adjective *human* placed before it, is another word for Nothing. And one of the wisest men in the world declared he knew Nothing.

But, without carrying it so far, this I believe may be allowed, that it is at least possible for a man to know Nothing. And whoever hath read over many works of our ingenious moderns, with proper attention and emolument, will, I believe, confess that, if he understand them right, he understands Nothing.

This is a secret not known to all readers, and want of this knowledge hath occasioned much puzzling; for where a book or chapter or paragraph hath seemed to the reader to contain Nothing, his modesty hath sometimes persuaded him that the true meaning of the author hath escaped him, instead of concluding, as in reality the fact was, that the author in the said book, etc., did truly and *bona fide* mean Nothing. I remember once, at the table of a person of great eminence, and one no less distinguished by superiority of wit than fortune, when a very dark passage was read out of a poet famous for being so sublime that he is often out of the sight of his reader, some persons present declared they did not understand the meaning. The gentleman himself, casting his eye over the performance, testified a surprise at the dullness of his company, seeing Nothing could, he said, possibly be plainer than the meaning of the passage which they stuck at. This set all of us to puzzling again, but with like success; we frankly owned we could not find it out, and desired he would explain it. "Explain it!" said the gentleman, "why, he means Nothing."

In fact, this mistake arises from a too vulgar error among persons unacquainted with the mystery of writing, who imagine it impossible that a man should sit down to write without any meaning at all! whereas, in reality, nothing is more common: for, not to instance in myself, who have confessedly set down to write this essay with Nothing in my head, or, which is much the same thing, to write about Nothing,

it may be incontestably proved, *ab effectu,* that Nothing is commoner among the moderns. The inimitable author of a preface to the Posthumous Eclogues of a late ingenious young gentleman, says, "There are men who sit down to write what they think, and others to think what they shall write." But indeed there is a third and much more numerous sort, who never think either before they sit down or afterwards, and who, when they produce on paper what was before in their heads, are sure to produce Nothing.

Thus we have endeavoured to demonstrate the nature of Nothing, by showing first, definitively, *what it is not;* and, secondly, by describing *what it is.* The next thing therefore proposed is to show its various kinds.

Now some imagine these several kinds differ in name only. But, without endeavouring to confute so absurd an opinion, especially as these different kinds of Nothing occur frequently in the best authors, I shall content myself with setting them down, and leave it to the determination of the distinguished reader, whether it is probable, or indeed possible, that they should all convey one and the same meaning.

These are, Nothing *per se* Nothing; Nothing at all; Nothing in the least; Nothing in nature; Nothing in the world; Nothing in the whole world; Nothing in the whole universal world. And perhaps many other of which we say—Nothing.

SECTION III

Of the Dignity of Nothing: and an Endeavour to Prove That It is the End as well as Beginning of All Things

Nothing contains so much dignity as Nothing. Ask an infamous worthless nobleman (if any such be) in what his dignity consists. It may not be perhaps consistent with his dignity to give you an answer, but suppose he should be willing to condescend so far, what could he in effect say? Should he say he had it from his ancestors, I apprehend a lawyer would oblige him to prove that the virtues to which his dignity was annexed descended to him. If he claims it as inherent in the title, might he not be told, that a title originally implied dignity, as it implied the presence of those virtues to which dignity is inseparably annexed; but that no implication will fly in the face of downright positive proof to the contrary. In short, to examine no farther, since his endeavour to derive it from any other fountain would be equally impotent, his dignity arises from Nothing, and in reality is Nothing. Yet, that this dignity really exists, that it glares in the eyes of men,

and produces much good to the person who wears it, is, I believe, incontestable.

Perhaps this may appear in the following syllogism.

The respect paid to men on account of their titles is paid at least to the supposal of their superior virtues and abilities, or it is paid to Nothing.

But when a man is a notorious knave or fool it is impossible there should be any such supposal.

The conclusion is apparent.

Now, that no man is ashamed of either paying or receiving this respect I wonder not, since the great importance of Nothing seems, I think, to be pretty apparent: but that they should deny the Deity worshipped, and endeavour to represent Nothing as Something, is more worthy reprehension. This is a fallacy extremely common. I have seen a fellow, whom all the world knew to have Nothing in him, not only pretend to Something himself, but supported in that pretension by others who have been less liable to be deceived. Now whence can this proceed but from their being ashamed of Nothing? A modesty very peculiar to this age.

But, notwithstanding all such disguises and deceit, a man must have very little discernment who can live very long in courts, or populous cities, without being convinced of the great dignity of Nothing; and though he should, through corruption or necessity, comply with the vulgar worship and adulation, he will know to what it is paid; namely, to Nothing.

The most astonishing instance of this respect, so frequently paid to Nothing, is when it is paid (if I may so express myself) to something less than Nothing; when the person who receives it is not only void of the quality for which he is respected, but is in reality notoriously guilty of the vices directly opposite to the virtues whose applause he receives. This is, indeed, the highest degree of Nothing, or (if I may be allowed the word), the Nothingest of all Nothings.

Here it is to be known, that respect may be aimed at Something and really light on Nothing. For instance, when mistaking certain things called gravity, canting, blustering, ostentation, pomp, and such like, for wisdom, piety, magnanimity, charity, true greatness, etc., we give to the former the honour and reverence due to the latter. Not that I would be understood so far to discredit my subject as to insinuate that gravity, canting, etc., are really Nothing; on the contrary, there is much more reason to suspect (if we judge from the practice of the world) that wisdom, piety, and other virtues, have a good title to that name. But we do not, in fact, pay our respect to the former, but to the latter: in other words, we pay it to that which is not, and consequently pay it to Nothing.

So far then for the dignity of the subject on which I am treating. I am now to show, that Nothing is the end as well as beginning of all things.

That everything is resolvable, and will be resolved into its first principles, will be, I believe, readily acknowledged by all philosophers. As, therefore, we have sufficiently proved the world came from Nothing, it follows that it will likewise end in the same: but as I am writing to a nation of Christians, I have no need to be prolix on this head; since every one of my readers, by his faith, acknowledges that the world is to have an end, *i.e.*, is to come to Nothing.

And, as Nothing is the end of the world, so is it of everything in the world. Ambition, the greatest, highest, noblest, finest, most heroic and godlike of all passions, what doth it end in?—Nothing. What did Alexander, Cæsar, and all the rest of that heroic band, who have plundered and massacred so many millions, obtain by all their care, labour, pain, fatigue, and danger?—Could they speak for themselves must they not own, that the end of all their pursuit was Nothing? Nor is this the end of private ambition only. What is become of that proud mistress of the world—the *Caput triumphati orbis*—that Rome of which her own flatterers so liberally prophesied the immortality? In what hath all her glory ended? Surely in Nothing.

Again, what is the end of avarice? Not power, or pleasure, as some think, for the miser will part with a shilling for neither: not ease or happiness; for the more he attains of what he desires, the more uneasy and miserable he is. If every good in this world was put to him, he could not say he pursued one. Shall we say then he pursues misery only? That surely would be contradictory to the first principles of human nature. May we not therefore, nay, must we not confess, that he aims at Nothing? especially if he be himself unable to tell us what is the end of all this bustle and hurry, this watching and toiling, this self-denial and self-constraint?

It will not, I apprehend, be sufficient for him to plead that his design is to amass a large fortune, which he never can nor will use himself, nor would willingly quit to any other person: unless he can show us some substantial good which this fortune is to produce, we shall certainly be justified in concluding that his end is the same with that of ambition.

The great Mr. Hobbes so plainly saw this, that as he was an enemy to that notable immaterial substance which we have here handled, and therefore unwilling to allow it the large province we have contended for, he advanced a very strange doctrine and asserted truly—That in all these grand pursuits the means themselves were the end proposed, viz., to ambition—plotting, fighting, danger, difficulty, and such like: to avarice—cheating, starving, watching, and the numberless painful arts by which this passion proceeds.

However easy it may be to demonstrate the absurdity of this opinion it will be needless to my purpose, since, if we are driven to confess that the means are the only end attained, I think we must likewise confess that the end proposed is absolutely Nothing.

As I have shown the end of our two greatest and noblest pursuits, one or other of which engages almost every individual of the busy part of mankind, I shall not tire the reader with carrying him through all the rest, since I believe the same conclusion may be easily drawn from them all.

I shall therefore finish this Essay with an inference, which aptly enough suggests itself from what hath been said: seeing that such is its dignity and importance, and that it is really the end of all those things which are supported with so much pomp and solemnity, and looked on with such respect and esteem, surely it becomes a wise man to regard Nothing with the utmost awe and adoration; to pursue it with all his parts and pains, and to sacrifice to it his ease, his innocence, and his present happiness. To which noble pursuit we have this great incitement, that we may assure ourselves of never being cheated or deceived in the end proposed. The virtuous, wise, and learned may then be unconcerned at all the changes of ministries and of government; since they may be well satisfied, that while ministers of state are rogues themselves, and have inferior knavish tools to bribe and reward, true virtue, wisdom, learning, wit, and integrity, will most certainly bring their possessors—Nothing.

* * *

SAMUEL JOHNSON

"He was called the Bear; and did indeed too often look, and roar, like one; being forced to it in his own defence; yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's." So Carlyle describes one of the most notable figures in English literature. It is a point that needs to be made, for Johnson's brusqueness and downrightness tend to make us forget a kindness of heart that was real though not so apparent. He was born at Lichfield in 1709, and after going to Oxford where he read widely but in a desultory and irregular fashion, he returned to his birthplace without a degree. After some unsuccessful attempts at school-keeping he became a hack writer, an occupation for which his vast store of miscellaneous knowledge peculiarly fitted him. His writings include some poems, the famous *Dictionary*, *Rasselas*, the *Lives of the Poets*, and an edition of Shakespeare's works, as well as two periodical publications entitled respectively *The Rambler* and *The Idler*. These contained moralizing essays written in the cumbrous manner which is styled "Johnsonese." One—from *The Rambler*—is given here. He died in 1784.

THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN A GARRET

Οσσαν επ Ουλυμπω μεμασαν Θεμεν αυταρ επ Οσση
Πηλιον ειυοσιφυλλον ιν ουρανος αμβατος ειη
HOMER

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies:
Heav'd on Olympus, tott'ring Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood. POPE

TO THE RAMBLER

SIR:—Nothing has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven, by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silk-worm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the

goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, ανεμων πνεοντνω την ηχω προσκμνεε; "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cùm fuderit auster,
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him:

Sed nil dulcius est, bene quàm munita tenere
Editâ doctrinâ sapientum templa serena;
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare, atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ.

—— 'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd;
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.

DRYDEN

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time: the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

Causa latet: res est notissima.

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.

ADDISON

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by

the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether: as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction

and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth story, is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but in his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon's house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps

in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil's climate in some lines of his Georgic: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS

* * *

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

AFTER Addison and Steele the English essay, though enjoying great popularity as a result of their efforts, failed to maintain its high standard. "Johnsonese" was by no means the ideal style for it, and Goldsmith did a great service in restoring the light touch which is essential to the good essay. He set a fashion which was to be followed, with great advantage, by writers like Charles Lamb and Washington Irving, so that he must be regarded as having done very much for the development of the essay. Goldsmith was born in County Longford, Ireland, in 1728. He was an incurable vagabond, and the friend of everybody but himself. After many vicissitudes he settled down—if Goldsmith can be said ever to have settled down—to hack work for the London booksellers, and made a hit with his "Chinese Letters," contributed to Newberry's *Public Ledger*. The idea was Montesquieu's but the humour and easy style were Goldsmith's. In addition, he wrote plays, a novel, much poetry, and a mass of hack work of a miscellaneous nature. He became a friend of Johnson and was a member of the famous club which met at the Turk's Head. Hopelessly impecunious to the end, he died in 1774.

The following essay is taken from *The Bee*.

A CITY NIGHT PIECE

Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet.
MARTIAL

THE clock has just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying

bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where Vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me—where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! The dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam; no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten: an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There will come a time, when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities, as great as this, have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just and as unbounded; and, with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality. Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some: the sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others; and, as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

"Here," he cries, "stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful, members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction."

How few appear in those streets which but some few hours ago were crowded; and those who appear, now no longer wear their daily mask nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and their distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been sacrificed to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches

I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasiness of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny; and every law which gives others security, becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility? or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse? Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the man who feels it more wretched than the object which sues for assistance.

* * *

LORD MACAULAY

Lord Macaulay's note of positive assurance would seem to be as little in keeping with the quiet art of the essayist as is Carlyle's vehemence. "I wish," Lord Melbourne is reported to have said, "that I was as sure of any one thing as Tom Macaulay is sure of everything." Yet if we regard the essay as primarily an expression of personality, it is certain that no writer has revealed himself more clearly through this medium. His vast stores of learning, his love of order, his emphasis, all show themselves in the essays which he contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*. To read one of them is to listen to the veritable accents of Macaulay as he harangued the guests at Holland House. He was born in 1800 and, like many another of our writers, was torn between his love of letters and his love of politics. A period spent in India, where he was mainly responsible for the Indian Penal Code, followed by his election for Edinburgh and a seat in the Cabinet, seemed to throw the balance definitely on the side of politics. Edinburgh's rejection, however, sent him back to his writing-desk to concentrate upon his *History*. The success of the four volumes which he completed is one of the outstanding features of literature. In addition to the *History* and the *Essays*, collected in book form, he wrote *The Lays of Ancient Rome*. He died on Christmas Day, 1859.

This essay was written as a review of Southey's *Life of Bunyan*. The opening paragraphs, which deal with that particular book, have been omitted.

BUNYAN'S *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

THE characteristic peculiarity of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is that it is the only work of its kind which possesses a strong human interest. Other allegories only amuse the fancy. The allegory of Bunyan

has been read by many thousands with tears. There are some good allegories in Johnson's works, and some of still higher merit by Addison. In these performances there is, perhaps, as much wit and ingenuity as in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. But the pleasure which is produced by the Vision of Mirza, the Vision of Theodore, the genealogy of Wit, or the contest between Rest and Labour, is exactly similar to the pleasure which we derive from one of Cowley's odes or from a canto of *Hudibras*. It is a pleasure which belongs wholly to the understanding, and in which the feelings have no part whatever. Nay, even Spenser himself, though assuredly one of the greatest poets that ever lived, could not succeed in the attempt to make allegory interesting. It was in vain that he lavished the riches of his mind on the House of Pride and the House of Temperance. One unpardonable fault, the fault of tediousness, pervades the whole of the *Fairy Queen*. We become sick of Cardinal Virtues and Deadly Sins, and long for the society of plain men and women. Of the persons who read the first canto, not one in ten reaches the end of the first book, and not one in a hundred perseveres to the end of the poem. Very few and very weary are those who are in at the death of the Blatant Beast. If the last six books, which are said to have been destroyed in Ireland, had been preserved, we doubt whether any heart less stout than that of a commentator would have held out to the end.

It is not so with *The Pilgrim's Progress*. That wonderful book, while it obtains admiration from the most fastidious critics, is loved by those who are too simple to admire it. Dr. Johnson, all whose studies were desultory, and who hated, as he said, to read books through, made an exception in favour of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. That work was one of the two or three works which he wished longer. It was by no common merit that the illiterate sectary extracted praise like this from the most pedantic of critics and the most bigoted of Tories. In the wildest parts of Scotland *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the delight of the peasantry. In every nursery *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a greater favourite than *Jack the Giant-killer*. Every reader knows the strait and narrow path as well as he knows a road in which he has gone backward and forward a hundred times. This is the highest miracle of genius, that things which are not should be as though they were, that the imaginations of one mind should become the personal recollections of another. And this miracle the tinker has wrought. There is no ascent, no declivity, no resting-place, no turn-stile, with which we are not perfectly acquainted. The wicket gate, and the desolate swamp which separates it from the City of Destruction, the long line of road, as straight as a rule can make it, the Interpreter's house, and all its fair shows, the prisoner in the iron cage, the palace, at the doors of which armed men kept guard, and on the battlements of which walked persons clothed all in gold, the cross and the sepulchre, the steep hill and the pleasant

arbour, the stately front of the House Beautiful by the wayside, the chained lions crouching in the porch, the low, green valley of Humiliation, rich with grass and covered with flocks, all are as well known to us as the sights of our own street. Then we come to the narrow place where Apollyon strode right across the whole breadth of the way, to stop the journey of Christian, and where afterwards the pillar was set up to testify how bravely the pilgrim had fought the good fight. As we advance the valley becomes deeper and deeper. The shade of the precipices on both sides falls blacker and blacker. The clouds gather overhead. Doleful voices, the clanking of chains, and the rushing of many feet to and fro, are heard through the darkness. The way, hardly discernible in gloom, runs close by the mouth of the burning pit, which sends forth its flames, its noisome smoke, and its hideous shapes, to terrify the adventurer. Thence he goes on, amidst the snares and pitfalls, with the mangled bodies of those who have perished lying in the ditch by his side. At the end of the long dark valley he passes the dens in which the old giants dwelt, amidst the bones of those whom they had slain.

Then the road passes straight on through a waste moor, till at length the towers of a distant city appear before the traveller; and soon he is in the midst of the innumerable multitudes of Vanity Fair. There are the jugglers and the apes, the shops and the puppet-shows. There are Italian Row, and French Row, and Spanish Row, and Britain Row, with their crowds of buyers, sellers, and loungers, jabbering all the languages of the earth.

Thence we go on by the little hill of the silver mine, and through the meadow of lilies, along the bank of that pleasant river which is bordered on both sides by fruit-trees. On the left side branches off the path leading to the horrible castle, the court-yard of which is paved with the skulls of pilgrims; and right onward are the sheepfolds and orchards of the Delectable Mountains.

From the Delectable Mountains, the way lies through the fogs and briers of the Enchanted Ground, with here and there a bed of soft cushions spread under a green arbour. And beyond is the land of Beulah, where the flowers, the grapes, and the songs of birds never cease, and where the sun shines night and day. Thence are plainly seen the golden pavements and streets of pearl, on the other side of that black and cold river over which there is no bridge.

All the stages of the journey, all the forms which cross or overtake the pilgrims, giants, and hobgoblins, ill-favoured ones and shining ones, the tall, comely, swarthy Madam Bubble, with her great purse by her side, and her fingers playing with the money, the black man in the bright vesture, Mr. Worldly Wiseman and my Lord Hategood, Mr. Talkative and Mrs. Timorous, all are actually existing beings to us. We follow the travellers through their allegorical progress with interest

not inferior to that with which we follow Elizabeth from Siberia to Moscow, or Jeanie Deans from Edinburgh to London. Bunyan is almost the only writer who ever gave to the abstract the interest of the concrete. In the works of many celebrated authors, men are mere personifications. We have not a jealous man, but jealousy, not a traitor, but perfidy, not a patriot, but patriotism. The mind of Bunyan, on the contrary, was so imaginative that personifications, when he dealt with them, became men. A dialogue between two qualities, in his dream, has more dramatic effect than a dialogue between two human beings in most plays. In this respect the genius of Bunyan bore a great resemblance to that of a man who had very little else in common with him, Percy Bysshe Shelley. The strong imagination of Shelley made him an idolater in his own despite. Out of the most indefinite terms of a hard, cold, dark, metaphysical system, he made a gorgeous Pantheon, full of beautiful, majestic, and life-like forms. He turned atheism itself into a mythology, rich with visions as glorious as the gods that live in the marble of Phidias, or the virgin saints that smile on us from the canvas of Murillo. The Spirit of Beauty, the Principle of Good, the Principle of Evil, when he treated of them, ceased to be abstractions. They took shape and colour. They were no longer mere words; but "intelligible forms"; "fair humanities"; objects of love, of adoration, or of fear. As there can be no stronger sign of a mind destitute of the poetical faculty than that tendency which was so common among the writers of the French school to turn images into abstractions, Venus, for example, into Love, Minerva into Wisdom, Mars into War, and Bacchus into Festivity, so there can be no stronger sign of a mind truly poetical than a disposition to reverse this abstracting process, and to make individuals out of generalities. Some of the metaphysical and ethical theories of Shelley were certainly most absurd and pernicious. But we doubt whether any modern poet has possessed in an equal degree some of the highest qualities of the great ancient masters. The words bard and inspiration, which seem so cold and affected when applied to other modern writers, have a perfect propriety when applied to him. He was not an author, but a bard. His poetry seems not to have been an art, but an inspiration. Had he lived to the full age of man, he might not improbably have given to the world some great work of the very highest rank in design and execution. But, alas!

But we must return to Bunyan. *The Pilgrim's Progress* undoubtedly is not a perfect allegory. The types are often inconsistent with each other; and sometimes the allegorical disguise is altogether thrown off. The river, for example, is emblematic of death; and we are told that every human being must pass through the river. But Faithful does not pass through it. He is martyred, not in shadow, but in reality, at Vanity Fair. Hopeful talks to Christian about Esau's birthright and

about his own convictions of sin as Bunyan might have talked with one of his own congregation. The damsels at the House Beautiful catechize Christiana's boys, as any good ladies might catechize any boys at a Sunday School. But we do not believe that any man, whatever might be his genius, and whatever his good luck, could long continue a figurative history without falling into many inconsistencies. We are sure that inconsistencies, scarcely less gross than the worst into which Bunyan has fallen, may be found in the shortest and most elaborate allegories of the *Spectator* and the *Rambler*. The *Tale of a Tub* and the *History of John Bull* swarm with similar errors, if the name of error can be properly applied to that which is unavoidable. It is not easy to make a simile go on all-fours. But we believe that no human ingenuity could produce such a centipede as a long allegory in which the correspondence between the outward sign and the thing signified should be exactly preserved. Certainly no writer, ancient or modern, has yet achieved the adventure. The best thing, on the whole, that an allegorist can do, is to present to his readers a succession of analogies, each of which may separately be striking and happy, without looking very nicely to see whether they harmonize with each other. This Bunyan has done; and, though a minute scrutiny may detect inconsistencies in every page of his Tale, the general effect which the Tale produces on all persons, learned and unlearned, proves that he has done well. The passages which it is most difficult to defend are those in which he altogether drops the allegory, and puts in the mouth of his pilgrims religious ejaculations and disquisitions, better suited to his own pulpit at Bedford or Reading than to the Enchanted Ground or to the Interpreter's Garden. Yet even these passages, though we will not undertake to defend them against the objections of critics, we feel that we could ill spare. We feel that the story owes much of its charm to these occasional glimpses of solemn and affecting subjects, which will not be hidden, which force themselves through the veil, and appear before us in their native aspect. The effect is not unlike that which is said to have been produced on the ancient stage, when the eyes of the actor were seen flaming through his mask, and giving life and expression to what would else have been an inanimate and uninteresting disguise.

It is very amusing and very instructive to compare *The Pilgrim's Progress* with the *Grace Abounding*. The latter work is indeed one of the most remarkable pieces of autobiography in the world. It is a full and open confession of the fancies which passed through the mind of an illiterate man, whose affections were warm, whose nerves were irritable, whose imagination was ungovernable, and who was under the influence of the strongest religious excitement. In whatever age Bunyan had lived, the history of his feelings would, in all probability, have been very curious. But the time in which his lot was cast was the

time of a great stirring of the human mind. A tremendous burst of public feeling, produced by the tyranny of the hierarchy, menaced the old ecclesiastical institutions with destruction. To the gloomy regularity of one intolerant Church had succeeded the licence of innumerable sects, drunk with the sweet and heady must of their new liberty. Fanaticism, engendered by persecution, and destined to engender persecution in turn, spread rapidly through society. Even the strongest and most commanding minds were not proof against this strange taint Any time might have produced George Fox and James Naylor. But to one time alone belong the frantic delusions of such a statesman as Vane, and the hysterical tears of such a soldier as Cromwell.

The history of Bunyan is the history of a most excitable mind in an age of excitement. By most of his biographers he has been treated with gross injustice. They have understood in a popular sense all those strong terms of self-condemnation which he employed in a theological sense. They have, therefore, represented him as an abandoned wretch, reclaimed by means almost miraculous, or, to use their favourite metaphor, "as a brand plucked from the burning." Mr. Ivimey calls him the depraved Bunyan and the wicked Tinker of Elstow. Surely Mr. Ivimey ought to have been too familiar with the bitter accusations which the most pious people are in the habit of bringing against themselves, to understand literally all the strong expressions which are to be found in the *Grace Abounding*. It is quite clear, as Mr. Southey most justly remarks, that Bunyan never was a vicious man. He married very early; and he solemnly declares that he was strictly faithful to his wife. He does not appear to have been a drunkard. He owns, indeed, that, when a boy, he never spoke without an oath. But a single admonition cured him of this bad habit for life; and the cure must have been wrought early; for at eighteen he was in the army of the Parliament; and, if he had carried the vice of profaneness into that service, he would doubtless have received something more than an admonition from Sergeant Bind-their-kings-in-chains, or Captain Hew-Agag-in-pieces-before-the-Lord. Bell-ringing and playing at hockey on Sundays seem to have been the worst vices of this depraved tinker. They would have passed for virtues with Archbishop Laud. It is quite clear that, from a very early age, Bunyan was a man of strict life and of a tender conscience. "He had been," says Mr. Southey, "a blackguard." Even this we think too hard a censure. Bunyan was not, we admit, so fine a gentleman as Lord Digby; but he was a blackguard no otherwise than as every labouring man that ever lived has been a blackguard. Indeed, Mr. Southey acknowledges this. "Such he might have been expected to be by his birth, breeding, and vocation. Scarcely, indeed, by possibility, could he have been otherwise." A man whose manners and sentiments are decidedly below those of his class deserves to be called a blackguard. But it is surely unfair to apply

so strong a word of reproach to one who is only what the great mass of every community must inevitably be.

Those horrible internal conflicts which Bunyan has described with so much power of language prove, not that he was a worse man than his neighbours, but that his mind was constantly occupied by religious considerations, that his fervour exceeded his knowledge, and that his imagination exercised despotic power over his body and mind. He heard voices from heaven. He saw strange visions of distant hills, pleasant and sunny as his own Delectable Mountains. From those abodes he was shut out, and placed in a dark and horrible wilderness, where he wandered through ice and snow, striving to make his way into the happy region of light. At one time he was seized with an inclination to work miracles. At another time he thought himself actually possessed by the devil. He could distinguish the blasphemous whispers. He felt his infernal enemy pulling at his clothes behind him. He spurned with his feet and struck with his hands at the destroyer. Sometimes he was tempted to sell his part in the salvation of mankind. Sometimes a violent impulse urged him to start up from his food, to fall on his knees, and to break forth into prayer. At length he fancied that he had committed the unpardonable sin. His agony convulsed his robust frame. He was, he says, as if his breast-bone would split; and this he took for a sign that he was destined to burst asunder like Judas. The agitation of his nerves made all his movements tremulous; and this trembling, he supposed, was a visible mark of his reprobation, like that which had been set on Cain. At one time, indeed, an encouraging voice seemed to rush in at the window, like the noise of wind, but very pleasant, and commanded, as he says, a great calm in his soul. At another time, a word of comfort "was spoke loud unto him; it showed a great word; it seemed to be writ in great letters." But these intervals of ease were short. His state, during two years and a half, was generally the most horrible that the human mind can imagine. "I walked," says he, with his own peculiar eloquence, "to a neighbouring town; and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and, after long musing, I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light; and as if the very stones in the street, and tiles upon the houses, did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I! for they stood fast, and kept their station. But I was gone and lost." Scarcely any madhouse could produce an instance of delusion so strong, or of misery so acute.

It was through this Valley of the Shadow of Death, overhung by darkness, peopled with devils, resounding with blasphemy and lamenta-

tion, and passing amidst quagmires, snares, and pitfalls, close by the very mouth of hell, that Bunyan journeyed to that bright and fruitful land of Beulah, in which he sojourned during the latter period of his pilgrimage. The only trace which his cruel sufferings and temptations seem to have left behind them was an affectionate compassion for those who were still in the state in which he had once been. Religion has scarcely ever worn a form so calm and soothing as in his allegory. The feeling which predominates through the whole book is a feeling of tenderness for weak, timid, and harassed minds. The character of Mr. Fearing, of Mr. Feeblemind, of Mr. Despondency and his daughter Miss Muchafraid, the account of poor Littlefaith who was robbed by the three thieves of his spending money, the description of Christian's terror in the dungeons of Giant Despair and in his passage through the river, all clearly show how strong a sympathy Bunyan felt, after his own mind had become clear and cheerful, for persons afflicted with religious melancholy.

Mr. Southey, who has no love for the Calvinists, admits that, if Calvinism had never worn a blacker appearance than in Bunyan's works, it would never have become a term of reproach. In fact, those works of Bunyan with which we are acquainted are by no means more Calvinistic than the articles and homilies of the Church of England. The moderation of his opinions on the subject of predestination gave offence to some zealous persons. We have seen an absurd allegory, the heroine of which is named Hephzibah, written by some raving supralapsarian preacher who was dissatisfied with the mild theology of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In this foolish book, if we recollect rightly, the Interpreter is called the Enlightener, and the House Beautiful is Castle Strength. Mr. Southey tells us that the Catholics had also their *Pilgrim's Progress*, without a Giant Pope, in which the Interpreter is the Director, and the House Beautiful Grace's Hall. It is surely a remarkable proof of the power of Bunyan's genius, that two religious parties, both of which regarded his opinions as heterodox, should have had recourse to him for assistance.

There are, we think, some characters and scenes in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which can be fully comprehended and enjoyed only by persons familiar with the history of the times through which Bunyan lived. The character of Mr. Greatheart, the guide, is an example. His fighting is, of course, allegorical; but the allegory is not strictly preserved. He delivers a sermon on imputed righteousness to his companions; and, soon after, he gives battle to Giant Grim, who had taken upon him to back the lions. He expounds the fifty-third chapter of *Isaiah* to the household and guests of Gaius; and then he sallies out to attack Slaygood, who was of the nature of flesh-eaters, in his den. These are inconsistencies; but they are inconsistencies which add, we think, to the interest of the narrative. We have not the least doubt that Bunyan

had in view some stout old Greatheart of Naseby and Worcester, who prayed with his men before he drilled them, who knew the spiritual state of every dragoon in his troop, and who, with the praises of God in his mouth, and a two-edged sword in his hand, had turned to flight, on many fields of battle, the swearing, drunken bravoes of Rupert and Lunsford.

Every age produces such men as By-ends. But the middle of the seventeenth century was eminently prolific of such men. Mr. Southey thinks that the satire was aimed at some particular individual; and this seems by no means improbable. At all events, Bunyan must have known many of those hypocrites who followed religion only when religion walked in silver slippers, when the sun shone, and when the people applauded. Indeed, he might have easily found all the kindred of By-ends among the public men of his time. He might have found among the peers my Lord Turn-about, my Lord Time-server, and my Lord Fair-speech; in the House of Commons, Mr. Smoothman, Mr. Anything, and Mr. Facing-both-ways; nor would "the parson of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues," have been wanting. The town of Bedford probably contained more than one politician who, after contriving to raise an estate by seeking the Lord during the reign of the saints, contrived to keep what he had got by persecuting the saints during the reign of the strumpets—and more than one priest who, during repeated changes in the discipline and doctrines of the Church, had remained constant to nothing but his benefice.

One of the most remarkable passages in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is that in which the proceedings against Faithful are described. It is impossible to doubt that Bunyan intended to satirize the mode in which state trials were conducted under Charles II. The licence given to the witnesses for the prosecution, the shameless partiality and ferocious insolence of the judge, the precipitancy and the blind rancour of the jury, remind us of those odious mummeries which, from the Restoration to the Revolution, were merely forms preliminary to hanging, drawing, and quartering. Lord Hategood performs the office of counsel for the prisoners as well as Scroggs himself could have performed it.

> *Judge.* Thou runagate, heretic, and traitor, hast thou heard what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against thee?
>
> *Faithful.* May I speak a few words in my own defence?
>
> *Judge.* Sirrah, sirrah! thou deservest to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the place; yet, that all men may see our gentleness to thee, let us hear what thou, vile runagate, hast to say.

No person who knows the state trials can be at a loss for parallel cases. Indeed, write what Bunyan would, the baseness and cruelty of the lawyers of those times "sinned up to it still," and even went beyond it. The imaginary trial of Faithful, before a jury composed of personified vices, was just and merciful, when compared with the real trial

of Alice Lisle before that tribunal where all the vices sat in the person of Jeffreys.

The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect, the dialect of plain working men, was perfectly sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language, no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed.

Cowper said, forty or fifty years ago, that he dared not name John Bunyan in his verse, for fear of moving a sneer. To our refined forefathers, we suppose, Lord Roscommon's *Essay on Translated Verse*, and the Duke of Buckinghamshire's *Essay on Poetry*, appeared to be compositions infinitely superior to the allegory of the preaching tinker. We live in better times; and we are not afraid to say, that, though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of those minds produced *Paradise Lost*, the other *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

* * *

CHARLES LAMB

If a choice had to be made of the typical English essayist, it would fall inevitably upon Charles Lamb. He had all the qualities which go to the composition of fine essays—a sure and discriminating taste, a light and easy touch, the gift of not taking either himself or his subject too seriously, and the happy knack of getting at once on intimate terms with his readers. Except for a chosen few, he was not an easy man to know in person, but through the medium of the printed page no more lovable man ever lived. Yet it is necessary to utter a word of caution here. Lamb was by no means the lamb-like person which tradition has represented him to be. Just as Gray dubbed Johnson a bear and a bear he remains in popular estimation to this day, so Coleridge labelled Lamb "gentle-hearted" and the half-truth has persisted. Gentle Elia remains a literary figment who never had any counterpart in the flesh. Lovable he was, but Lamb was most emphatically a man, with a man's corners and failings. He was born in 1775, and, like Johnson, was an unrepentant Londoner. He spent his working

life as a clerk, for a short time at the South Sea House, and afterward at the East India House. Through the instrumentality of Coleridge he made the acquaintance of a literary circle consisting of Wordsworth, Southey, Hazlitt, and others, and he utilized his leisure in contributing essays to *The London Magazine*. These were reprinted as *The Essays of Elia*. He also wrote plays, some verse, a novel, *Tales from Shakespeare*, *The Adventures of Ulysses*, and *Specimens from the Dramatic Poets*. He died in 1834.

I. MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

"A CLEAR fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game." This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game, and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation,

to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favourite author: his *Rape of the Lock* her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors;—the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille [1]—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone;—above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,[2]—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist;—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might coextend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel: perpetually changing postures and connexions; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings of to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up:—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality

[1] Ace of Spades.
[2] "Playing alone" and taking all the tricks.

and looked deeper than the colours of things.—Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field?—She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps?—Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?

"But the eye, my dear Madame, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out.—You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the anteroom, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court-cards?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets—the contrasting deadly-killing sables—the 'hoary majesty of spades'—Pam [1] in all his glory!—

"All these might be dispensed with; and with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless; but the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling.—Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in!—Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol,—or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money), or chalk and a slate!"—

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence:—this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with

[1] Knave of Clubs.

religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say,—disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce *"go,"* or *"that's a go."* She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring *"two for his heels."* There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique—repique—the capot—they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus:—Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play.—Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille.—But in square games (*she meant whist*), all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game.—By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducements could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion!—chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is

obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending?—Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in back-gammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit,—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless.—She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly), were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other:—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado, great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such.—

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a toothache, or a sprained ankle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*.

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize.—

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted[1] her)—(dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and, as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

II. NEW YEAR'S EVE

EVERY man hath two birthdays: two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birthday hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand anything in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

Of all sound of all bells—(bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected, in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour; nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary, when he exclaimed—

> I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night; though some of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than

[1] Won all the cards.

any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who—

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties; new books, new faces, new years,—from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments. I am armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love,* as the gamesters phrase it, games for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W———n, than that so passionate a love adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds *in banco,* and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.

In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox when I say, that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself* without the imputation of self-love?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective—and mine is painfully so—can have a less respect for his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humoursome; a notorious * * * ; addicted to * * * ; averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it;— * * * besides; a stammering buffoon; what you will; lay it on, and spare not; I subscribe to it all, and much more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door—but for the child Elia—that "other me," there, in the background—I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master—with as little reference, I protest, to his stupid changeling of five and forty, as if it had been a child of some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its sleep. I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood.—God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed!—Thou art sophisticated.—I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was—how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember was indeed myself,—and not some dissembling

guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being!

That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause: simply, that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself; and having no offspring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, Reader—(a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution; and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony.—In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth?—I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like misers' farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods, and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away "like a weaver's shuttle." Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived; I, and my friends: to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candlelight, and fireside

conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it comes at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here,—the recognizable face—the "sweet assurance of a look"?

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying—to give it its mildest name—does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then we are as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity; moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances, —that cold ghost of the sun, or Phoebus' sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles:—I am none of her minions—I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death unto my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore.—I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge; and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed death—but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six score thousand devils, as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as an universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of! In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy *Privation,* or more frightful and confounding *Positive!*

Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall "lie down with kings and emperors in death," who in his lifetime never greatly coveted the society of such bedfellows?—or, forsooth, that "so shall the fairest face appear"?—why, to comfort me, must Alice W———n be a goblin? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that "Such as he now is, I must shortly be." Not so shortly, friend, perhaps, as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move about. I am worth

twenty of thee. Know thy betters! Thy New Years' days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine—and while that turncoat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.

THE NEW YEAR

Hark, the cock crows, and yon bright star
Tells us, the day himself's not far;
And see where, breaking from the night,
He gilds the western hills with light.
With him old Janus doth appear,
Peeping into the future year,
With such a look as seems to say
The prospect is not good that way.
Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy;
When the prophetic fear of things
A more tormenting mischief brings
More full of soul tormenting gall
Than direst mischiefs can befall.
But stay! but stay! methinks my sight
Better informed by clearer light,
Discerns sereneness in that brow
That all contracted seem'd but now.
His revers'd face may show distaste,
And frown upon the ills are past;
But that which this way looks is clear,
And smiles upon the New-born Year.
He looks too from a place so high,
The year lies open to his eye;
And all the moments open are
To the exact discoverer.
Yet more and more he smiles upon
The happy revolution.
Why should we then suspect or fear
The influences of a year,
So smiles upon us the first morn,
And speaks us good so soon as born?
Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
This cannot but make better proof;
Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
The last, why so we may this too;
And then the next in reason shou'd
Be superexcellently good:
For the worst ills (we daily see)

Have no more perpetuity
Than the best fortunes that do fall;
Which also bring us wherewithal
Longer their being to support,
Than those do of the other sort:
And who has one good year in three,
And yet repines at destiny,
Appears ungrateful in the case,
And merits not the good he has.
Then let us welcome the New Guest
With lusty brimmers of the best;
Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
And renders e'en Disaster sweet:
And though the Princess turn her back,
Let us but line ourselves with sack,
We better shall by far hold out,
Till the next Year she face about.

How say you, Reader—do not these verses smack of the rough magnanimity of the old English vein? Do they not fortify like a cordial; enlarging the heart, and productive of sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?—Passed like a cloud—absorbed in the purging sunlight of clear poetry—clean washed away by a wave of genuine Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries. And now another cup of the generous! And a merry New Year, and many of them, to you all, my masters!

* * *

WILLIAM HAZLITT

THE essays of Hazlitt show a slight declension from the high standard set by Charles Lamb. Hazlitt was too much in earnest and had too little of a sense of proportion to achieve perfection in this form. Yet his work, at its best, is so good that it seems ungracious to draw a comparison at all. He is a perfect master of the rhythms and harmonies that can be compassed with the short sentence, and his influence in this respect has been a healthy one. His writing is always terse, clear, and downright. It has great energy and movement, but at the same time it achieves a stateliness which bustling writers often miss. Hazlitt was born in 1778 and met Coleridge when he was 20. He studied art and achieved some success as a portrait-painter, but he soon relinquished this for literature. He wrote the essays, which were scattered over various periodicals; *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*; *Lectures on the English Poets*; *The Spirit of the Age*; and the *Life of Napoleon*. He died in 1830.

ON GOING A JOURNEY

ONE of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

> The fields his study, nature was his book.

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

> —— a friend in my retreat,
> Whom I may whisper, solitude is sweet.

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

> May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,

that I absent myself from the town for awhile, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being and revel there, as the sunburnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis

better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff of the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid; if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with anyone for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till

I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and, on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue." My old friend C———, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had"; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following.

—— Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled streams, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbours o'ergrown with woodbines, caves and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing.
Or gather rushes, to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love;
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest.

Faithful Shepherdess.

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds; but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot:—I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects; it should be reserved for table-talk. L——— is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant, there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine is it to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heart-felt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop; they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed on cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul este profani!* These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world: but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumspection and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its

striking privileges—"Lord of one's self, uncumber'd with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in a boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla.* It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise,* at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the

high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

The beautiful is vanished, and returns not.

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts of regret and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on and think no more of it; the horizon that shuts it from our sight, also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild, barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, land to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For in-

stance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population, known by the name of China to us? An inch of pasteboard on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piece-meal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to; in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

> The glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd ——

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered ciceroni that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to common-place beauties in matchless pictures.—As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from

home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen; there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.—Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones; I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connexions. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,

> Out of my country and myself I go.

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life

in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

* * *

LEIGH HUNT

Leigh Hunt, born in 1784, was contributing essays to *The Traveller* at the age of 20. He excelled in that higher class of periodical writing which shows how futile it is to attempt to draw any dividing line between literature and journalism. Like Defoe, he suffered imprisonment for his outspokenness. After serving his term he got to know Keats, Shelley, and Byron. He wrote an *Autobiography* which is a model of its kind. As an essayist it has been justly said that he is "a kind of feminine diminutive of Lamb, excellent in fancy and in his unlimited command of literary illustration; but far inferior in decisive insight and penetrative masculine wit." He died in 1859.

The following essay is noted in Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography* as being Hazlitt's favourite.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

THIS is an article for the reader to think of when he or she is warm in bed, a little before he goes to sleep, the clothes at his ear, and the wind moaning in some distant crevice.

"Blessings," exclaimed Sancho, "on him that first invented sleep! It wraps a man all round like a cloak." It is a delicious moment certainly—that of being well nestled in bed, and feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep. The good is to come, not past: the limbs have been just tired enough to render the remaining in one posture delightful: the labour of the day is done. A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one:—the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more, with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of her sleeping child;—the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye;—'tis closing;—'tis more closing;—'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.

It is said that sleep is best before midnight: and Nature herself, with her darkness and chilling dews, informs us so. There is another reason for going to bed betimes; for it is universally acknowledged that lying late in the morning is a great shortener of life. At least, it is never found in company with longevity. It also tends to make people corpulent. But these matters belong rather to the subject of early rising than of sleep.

Sleep at a late hour in the morning is not half so pleasant as the more timely one. It is sometimes, however, excusable, especially to a

watchful or overworked head; neither can we deny the seducing merits of "t' other doze,"—the pleasing wilfulness of nestling in a new posture, when you know you ought to be up, like the rest of the house. But then you cut up the day, and your sleep the next night.

In the course of the day few people think of sleeping, except after dinner; and then it is often rather a hovering and nodding on the borders of sleep than sleep itself. This is a privilege allowable, we think, to none but the old, or the sickly, or the very tired and care-worn; and it should be well understood before it is exercised in company. To escape into slumber from an argument; or to take it as an affair of course, only between you and your biliary duct; or to assent with involuntary nods to all that you have just been disputing, is not so well; much less, to sit nodding and tottering beside a lady; or to be in danger of dropping your head into the fruit-plate or your host's face; or of waking up, and saying "Just so" to the bark of a dog; or "Yes, madam," to the black at your elbow.

Care-worn people, however, might refresh themselves oftener with day-sleep than they do; if their bodily state is such as to dispose them to it. It is a mistake to suppose that all care is wakeful. People sometimes sleep, as well as wake, by reason of their sorrow. The difference seems to depend upon the nature of their temperament; though in the *most* excessive cases, sleep is perhaps Nature's never-failing relief, as swooning is upon the rack. A person with jaundice in his blood shall lie down and go to sleep at noonday, when another of a different complexion shall find his eyes as uncloseable as a statue's, though he has had no sleep for nights together. Without meaning to lessen the dignity of suffering, which has quite enough to do with its waking hours, it is this that may often account for the profound sleeps enjoyed the night before hazardous battles, executions, and other demands upon an over-excited spirit.

The most complete and healthy sleep that can be taken in the day is in summer-time, out in a field. There is, perhaps, no solitary sensation so exquisite as that of slumbering on the grass or hay, shaded from the hot sun by a tree, with the consciousness of a fresh but light air running through the wide atmosphere and the sky stretching far overhead upon all sides. Earth, and heaven, and a placid humanity seem to have the creation to themselves. There is nothing between the slumberer and the naked and glad innocence of nature.

Next to this, but at a long interval, the most relishing snatch of slumber out of bed is the one which a tired person takes before he retires for the night, while lingering in his sitting-room. The consciousness of being very sleepy, and of having the power to go to bed immediately, gives great zest to the unwillingness to move. Sometimes he sits nodding in his chair; but the sudden and leaden jerks of the head to which a state of great sleepiness renders him liable, are generally

too painful for so luxurious a moment; and he gets into a more legitimate posture, sitting sideways with his head on the chair-back, or throwing his legs up at once on another chair, and half reclining. It is curious, however, to find how long an inconvenient posture will be borne for the sake of this foretaste of repose. The worst of it is, that on going to bed the charm sometimes vanishes; perhaps from the colder temperature of the chamber; for a fireside is a great opiate.

Speaking of the painful positions into which a sleepy lounger will get himself, it is amusing to think of the more fantastic attitudes that so often take place in bed. If we could add anything to the numberless things that have been said about sleep by the poets, it would be upon this point. Sleep never shows himself a greater leveller. A man in his waking moments may look as proud and self-possessed as he pleases. He may walk proudly, he may sit proudly, he may eat his dinner proudly; he may shave himself with an air of infinite superiority; in a word, he may show himself grand and absurd upon the most trifling occasions. But Sleep plays the petrifying magician. He arrests the proudest lord as well as the humblest clown in the most ridiculous postures: so that if you could draw a grandee from his bed without waking him, no limb-twisting fool in a pantomime should create wilder laughter. The toy with the string between its legs is hardly a posture-master more extravagant. Imagine a despot lifted up to the gaze of his valets, with his eyes shut, his mouth open, his left hand under his right ear, his other twisted and hanging helplessly before him like an idiot's, one knee lifted up, the other leg stretched out, or both knees huddled up together;—what a scarecrow to lodge majestic power in!

But Sleep is kindly even in his tricks; and the poets have treated him with proper reverence. According to the ancient mythologists he had even one of the Graces to wife. He had a thousand sons, of whom the chief were Morpheus, or the Shaper; Icelos, or the Likely; Phantasus, the Fancy; and Phobetor, the Terror. His dwelling some writers place in a dull and darkling part of the earth; others, with greater compliment, in heaven; and others, with another kind of propriety, by the sea-shore. There is a good description of it in Ovid; but in these abstracted tasks of poetry the moderns outvie the ancients; and there is nobody who has built his bower for him so finely as Spenser. Archimago, in the first book of the *Faerie Queene* (Canto I. st. 39), sends a little spirit down to Morpheus to fetch him a Dream:

> He, making speedy way through spersed ayre,
> And through the world of waters, wide and deepe.
> To Morpheus' house doth hastily repaire.
> Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe
> And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,

His dwelling is. There, Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash; and Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver dew his ever-drouping head,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spred.

And more to lull him in his slumber soft
A trickling streame from high rocke tumbling downe,
Mixed with a murmuring winde, much like the soune
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swoune.
No other noise, nor people's troublous cryes,
As still are wont to annoy the wallèd towne,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lyes,
Wrapt in eternall silence, far from enimyes.

Chaucer has drawn the cave of the same god with greater simplicity; but nothing can have a more deep and sullen effect than his cliffs and cold running waters. It seems as real as an actual solitude, or some quaint old picture in a book of travels in Tartary. He is telling the story of Ceyx and Alcyone in the poem called his Dream. Juno tells a messenger to go to Morpheus and "bid him creep into the body" of the drowned king, to let his wife know the fatal event by his apparition.

This messenger tooke leave, and went
Upon his way; and never he stent
Till he came to the dark valley,
That stant betweene rockes twey.
There never yet grew corne, ne gras.
Ne tree, ne naught that aught was.
Beast, ne man, ne naught else;
Save that there were a few wells
Came running fro the cliffs adowne,
That made a deadly sleeping soune,
And runnen downe right by a cave,
That was under a rocky grave,
Amid the valley, wonder-deepe.
There these goddis lay asleepe,
Morpheus and Eclympasteire,
That was the god of Sleepis heire,
That slept and did none other worke.

Where the credentials of this new son and heir, Eclympasteire, are to be found, we know not; but he acts very much, it must be allowed, like an heir-presumptive, in sleeping and doing "none other work."

We dare not trust ourselves with many quotations upon sleep from the poets; they are so numerous as well as beautiful. We must content ourselves with mentioning that our two most favourite passages are one in the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, admirable for its contrast to a

scene of terrible agony, which it closes; and the other the following address in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy of *Valentinian*, the hero of which is also a sufferer under bodily torment. He is in a chair, slumbering; and these most exquisite lines are gently sung with music:

> Care-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
> Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
> On this afflicted prince. Fall like a cloud
> In gentle showers: give nothing that is loud
> Or painful to his slumbers: easy, sweet,
> And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
> Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
> Like hollow murmuring wind, or silver rain:
> Into this prince, gently, oh gently slide,
> And kiss him into slumbers, like a bride.

How earnest and prayer-like are these pauses! How lightly sprinkled, and yet how deeply settling, like rain, the fancy! How quiet, affectionate, and perfect the conclusion!

Sleep is most graceful in an infant; soundest, in one who has been tired in the open air; completest, to the seaman after a hard voyage: most welcome, to the mind haunted with one idea; most touching to look at, in the parent that has wept; lightest, in the playful child: proudest, in the bride adored.

* * *

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

De Quincey was born at Manchester in 1785. In 1802 he ran away from school, and, after some months spent in wandering, led a solitary life in London. He resumed a more normal life and entered Oxford where he failed to take his degree. After this he joined forces with the Lake poets, and wrote for the reviews. At Oxford he had begun to take opium and to *The London Magazine* he contributed his *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, which brought him immediate popularity. He also wrote *Klosterheim*, an unsuccessful novel; *The Logic of Political Economy*; and a large number of essays and miscellaneous writings. He died in 1859. His work presents a contrast to that of Hazlitt, for it was creative rather than critical. Out of his own life and dreams, out of his bondage to opium, he fashioned a marvellous prose-miscellany which soars at times to heights that are unfamiliar to prose. His work bears some resemblance to that of Sir Thomas Browne, but it lacks the calm and majestic march of the earlier writer's manner. He did, however, succeed in showing that prose could be so flexible and yet so stately that it would be equal to any theme, no matter how lofty.

ON THE KNOCKING AT THE GATE IN *MACBETH*

FROM my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth*. It was this: the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was, that it reflected back upon the murderer a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately I endeavoured with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect.

Here I pause for one moment, to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding, when it stands in opposition to any other faculty of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind, and the most to be distrusted; and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else, which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophical purposes. Of this out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever, who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of the perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends upon the laws of that science; as, for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now in all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why? For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is—that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line, should not *appear* a horizontal line; a line that made any angle with the perpendicular, less than a right angle, would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly, he makes the line of his houses a horizontal line, and fails, of course, to produce the effect demanded. Here, then, is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes, as it were; for not only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but (what is monstrous!) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does

not know that he has seen (and therefore *quoad* his consciousness has *not* seen) that which he *has* seen every day of his life.

But to return from this digression, my understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth* should produce any effect, direct or reflected. In fact, my understanding said positively that it could *not* produce any effect. But I knew better; I felt that it did; and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it. At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams made his *début* on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied by anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing *doing* since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong; for it is unreasonable to expect all men to be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams. Now it will be remembered, that in the first of these murders (that of the Marrs), the same incident (of a knocking at the door, soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur, which the genius of Shakespeare has invented; and all good judges, and the most eminent dilettanti, acknowledged the felicity of Shakespeare's suggestion, as soon as it was actually realized. Here, then, was a fresh proof that I was right in relying on my own feeling, in opposition to my understanding; and I again set myself to study the problem; at length I solved it to my own satisfaction, and my solution is this. Murder, in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason, that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind (though different in degree) amongst all living creatures: this instinct, therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of "the poor beetle that we tread on," exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them,—not a sympathy of pity or approbation [1]). In the murdered person, all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion

[1] It seems almost ludicrous to guard and explain my use of a word, in a situation where it would naturally explain itself. But it has become necessary to do so, in

and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites him "with its petrific mace." But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion—jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred—which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look.

In *Macbeth*, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakespeare has introduced two murderers: and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated: but, though in Macbeth the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her,—yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, "the gracious Duncan," and adequately to expound "the deep damnation of his taking off," this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature, *i.e.*, the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man—was gone, vanished, extinct; and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvellously accomplished in the *dialogues* and *soliloquies* themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister in a fainting-fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is *that* in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis, on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully in the silence and desertion of the streets, and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting, as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly

consequence of the unscholarlike use of the word sympathy, at present so general, by which, instead of taking it in its proper sense, as the act of reproducing in our minds the feelings of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation, it is made a mere synonym of the word *pity;* and hence, instead of saying "sympathy *with* another," many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy *for* another."

resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth*. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart, and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed"; Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is, that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

O mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art; but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers; like frost and snow, rain and dew, hailstorm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that, the further we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

* * *

THOMAS CARLYLE

MANY unkind things have been said about Carlyle's style. It has been likened to "coal arriving next door," and the author himself said of his sentences that "perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes." But no one could deny his vigour. If his writing is twisted, abrupt, and uncouth it is because he is consumed with an anxiety that his message shall be delivered forcibly and without any hint of ambiguity. He was too

much of a preacher to make a really good essayist. He contributed a great deal to various reviews. His chief books are *Sartor Resartus*, *The French Revolution*, *Past and Present*, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, *Frederick the Great*, and *The Life of Sterling*. The list indicates truly that his genius lay in biography. He might be careless over detail, but his insight was uncannily sure. He was born in 1795 and died in 1881.

THE OPERA[1]

("Dear P.,—Not having anything of my own which I could contribute (as is my wish and duty) to this pious Adventure of yours, and not being able in these busy days to get anything ready, I decide to offer you a bit of an Excerpt from that singular *Conspectus of England*, lately written, not yet printed, by Professor Ezechiel Peasemeal, a distinguished American friend of mine. Dr. Peasemeal will excuse my printing it here. His *Conspectus*, a work of some extent, has already been crowned by the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Buncombe, which includes, as you know, the chief thinkers of the New World; and it will probably be printed entire in their 'Transactions' one day. Meanwhile let your readers have the first taste of it; and much good may it do them and you!"—T. C.)

MUSIC is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite; we look for moments, across the cloudy elements, into the eternal Sea of Light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of Nature, have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine. Their singer was a *vates*, admitted to the council of the universe, friend of the gods, and choicest benefactor to man.

Reader, it was actually so in Greek, in Roman, in Moslem, Christian, most of all in Old-Hebrew times; and if you look how it now is, you will find a change that should astonish you. Good Heavens, from a Psalm of Asaph to a seat at the London Opera in the Haymarket, what a road have men travelled! The waste that is made in music is probably among the saddest of all our squanderings of God's gifts. Music has, for a long time past, been avowedly mad, divorced from sense and the reality of things; and runs about now as an open Bedlamite, for a good many generations back, bragging that she has nothing to do with sense and reality, but with fiction and delirium only; and stares with unaffected amazement, not able to suppress an elegant burst of witty laughter, at my suggesting the old fact to her.

Fact nevertheless it is, forgotten, and fallen ridiculous as it may be.

[1] *Keepsake for 1852*.—The "dear P." there, I recollect, was my old friend Proctor (Barry Cornwall); and his "pious Adventure" had reference to that same Publication, under touching human circumstances which had lately arisen.

Tyrtæus, who had a little music, did not sing Barbers of Seville, but the need of beating back one's country's enemies; a most true song, to which the hearts of men did burst responsive into fiery melody, followed by fiery strokes before long. Sophocles also sang, and showed in grand dramatic rhythm and melody, not a fable but a fact, the best he could interpret it; the judgments of Eternal Destiny upon the erring sons of men. Æschylus, Sophocles, all noble poets were priests as well; and sang the *truest* (which was also the divinest) they had been privileged to discover here below. To "sing the praise of God," that, you will find, if you can interpret old words, and see what new things they mean, was always, and will always be, the business of the singer. He who forsakes that business, and, wasting our divinest gifts, sings the praise of Chaos, what shall we say of him!

David, king of Judah, a soul inspired by divine music and much other heroism, was wont to pour himself in song; he, with seer's eye and heart, discerned the Godlike amid the Human; struck tones that were an echo of the sphere-harmonies, and are still felt to be such. Reader, art thou one of a thousand, able still to *read* a Psalm of David, and catch some echo of it through the old dim centuries; feeling far off, in thy own heart, what it once was to other hearts made as thine? To sing it attempt not, for it is impossible in this late time; only know that it once was sung. Then go to the Opera, and hear, with unspeakable reflections, what things men now sing! . . .

Of the Haymarket Opera my account, in fine, is this: Lustres, candelabras, painting, gilding at discretion; a hall as of the Caliph Alraschid, or him that commanded the slaves of the Lamp; a hall as if fitted-up by the genii, regardless of expense. Upholstery, and the outlay of human capital, could do no more. Artists, too, as they are called, have been got together from the ends of the world, regardless likewise of expense, to do dancing and singing, some of them even geniuses in their craft. One singer in particular, called Coletti or some such name, seemed to me, by the cast of his face, by the tones of his voice, by his general bearing, so far as I could read it, to be a man of deep and ardent sensibilities, of delicate intuitions, just sympathies; originally an almost poetic soul, or man of *genius,* as we term it; stamped by Nature as capable of far other work than squalling here, like a blind Samson, to make the Philistines sport!

Nay, all of them had aptitudes, perhaps of a distinguished kind; and must, by their own and other people's labour, have got a training equal or superior in toilsomeness, earnest assiduity and patient travail to what breeds men to the most arduous trades. I speak not of kings, grandees, or the like show-figures; but few soldiers, judges, men of letters, can have had such pains taken with them. The very ballet-girls, with their muslin saucers round them, were perhaps little short of miraculous; whirling and spinning there in strange mad vortexes,

and then suddenly fixing themselves motionless, each upon her left or right great toe, with the other leg stretched out at an angle of ninety degrees,—as if you had suddenly pricked into the floor, by one of their points, a pair, or rather a multitudinous cohort, of mad restlessly jumping and clipping scissors, and so bidden them rest, with opened blades, and stand still, in the Devil's name! A truly notable motion; marvellous, almost miraculous, were not the people there so used to it. Motion peculiar to the Opera; perhaps the ugliest, and surely one of the most difficult, ever taught a female creature in this world. Nature abhors it; but Art does at least admit it to border on the impossible. One little Cerito, or Taglioni the Second, that night when I was there, went bounding from the floor as if she had been made of Indian-rubber, or filled with hydrogen gas, and inclined by positive levity to bolt through the ceiling; perhaps neither Semiramis nor Catherine the Second had bred herself so carefully.

Such talent, and such martyrdom of training, gathered from the four winds, was now here, to do its feat and be paid for it. Regardless of expense, indeed! The purse of Fortunatus seemed to have opened itself, and the divine art of Musical Sound and Rhythmic Motion was welcomed with an explosion of all the magnificences which the other arts, fine and coarse, could achieve. For you to think of some Rossini or Bellini in the rear of it, too: to say nothing of the Stanfields, and hosts of scene-painters, machinists, engineers, enterprisers;—fit to have taken Gibraltar, written the History of England, or reduced Ireland into Industrial Regiments, had they so set their minds to it!

Alas, and of all these notable or noticeable human talents, and excellent perseverances and energies, backed by mountains of wealth, and led by the divine art of Music and Rhythm vouchsafed by Heaven to them and us, what was to be the issue here this evening? An hour's amusement, not amusing either, but wearisome and dreary, to a high-dizened select populace of male and female persons, who seemed to me not much worth amusing! Could anyone have pealed into their hearts once, one true thought, and glimpse of Self-vision: "High-dizened, most expensive persons, Aristocracy so-called, or *Best* of the World, beware, beware what proofs you are giving here of Betterness and bestness!" And then the salutary pang of conscience in reply: "A select populace, with money in its purse, and drilled a little by the posture-master: good Heavens! if that were what, here and everywhere in God's Creation, I *am?* And a world all dying because I am, and show myself to be, and to have long been, even that? John, the carriage, the carriage; swift! Let me go home in silence, to reflection, perhaps to sackcloth and ashes!" This, and not amusement, would have profited those high-dizened persons.

Amusement, at any rate, they did not get from Euterpe and Melpomene. These two Muses, sent-for regardless of expense, I could

see, were but the vehicle of a kind of service which I judged to be Paphian rather. Young beauties of both sexes used their opera-glasses, you could notice, not entirely for looking at the stage. And, it must be owned, the light, in this explosion of all the upholsteries, and the human fine arts and coarse, was magical; and made your fair one an Armida,—if you liked her better so. Nay, certain old Improper Females (of quality), in their rouge and jewels, even these looked some *reminiscence* of enchantment; and I saw this and the other lean domestic Dandy, with icy smile on his old worn face; this and the other Marquis Chatabagues, Prince Mahogany, or the like foreign Dignitary, tripping into the boxes of said females, grinning there awhile, with dyed moustachios and macassar-oil graciosity, and then tripping-out again;—and, in fact, I perceived that Coletti and Cerito and the Rhythmic Arts were a mere accompaniment here.

Wonderful to see; and sad, if you had eyes! Do but think of it. Cleopatra threw pearls into her drink, in mere waste; which was reckoned foolish of her. But here had the Modern Aristocracy of men brought the divinest of its Arts, heavenly Music itself; and, piling all the upholsteries and ingenuities that other human art could do, had lighted them into a bonfire to illuminate an hour's flirtation of Chatabagues, Mahogany, and these improper persons! Never in Nature had I seen such waste before. O Coletti, you whose inborn melody, once of kindred, as I judged, to "the Melodies Eternal," might have valiantly weeded-out this and the other false thing from the ways of men, and made a bit of God's Creation more melodious,—they have purchased you away from that; chained you to the wheel of Prince Mahogany's chariot, and here you make sport for a macassar Chatabagues and his improper-females past the prime of life! Wretched spiritual Nigger, O, if you *had* some genius, and were not a born Nigger with mere appetite for pumpkin, should you have endured such a lot? I lament for you beyond all other expenses. Other expenses are light; you are the Cleopatra's pearl that should not have been flung into Mahogany's claret-cup. And Rossini, too, and Mozart and Bellini—O Heavens! when I think that Music too is condemned to be mad, and to burn herself, to this end, on such a funeral pile,—your celestial Opera-house grows dark and infernal to me! Behind its glitter stalks the shadow of Eternal Death; through it too, I look not "up into the divine eye," as Richter has it, "but down into the bottomless eyesocket" —not up towards God, Heaven, and the Throne of Truth, but too truly down towards Falsity, Vacuity, and the dwelling-place of Everlasting Despair. . . .

Good sirs, surely I by no means expect the Opera will abolish itself this year or the next. But if you ask me, Why heroes are not born now, why heroisms are not done now? I will answer you: It is a world all calculated for strangling of heroisms. At every ingress into

life, the genius of the world lies in wait for heroisms, and by seduction or compulsion unweariedly does its utmost to pervert them or extinguish them. Yes; to its Hells of sweating tailors, distressed needlewomen and the like, this Opera of yours is the appropriate Heaven! Of a truth, if you will read a Psalm of Asaph till you understand it, and then come hither and hear the Rossini-and-Coletti Psalm, you will find the ages have altered a good deal. . . .

Nor do I wish all men to become Psalmist Asaphs and fanatic Hebrews. Far other is my wish; far other, and wider, is now my notion of this Universe. Populations of stern faces, stern as any Hebrew, but capable withal of bursting into inextinguishable laughter on occasion:—do you understand that new and better form of character? Laughter also, if it come from the heart, is a heavenly thing. But, at least and lowest, I would have you a Population abhorring phantasms;—abhorring *unveracity* in all things; and in your "amusements," which are voluntary and not compulsory things, abhorring it most impatiently of all. . . .

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W. M. THACKERAY

In January, 1860, appeared the first number of *The Cornhill Magazine* with Thackeray as editor. The new venture was to bring success and wealth, but it also showed that the eminent novelist could write excellent essays. The *Roundabout Papers*, which he contributed to its pages, are delightfully named and as delightfully written. The following essay is one of them. Thackeray was born in 1811 and inherited from his father a sum that would have made him independent had he not been endowed also with some very expensive habits. In a few years his patrimony was exhausted and he saw plainly before him the necessity of working for a living. We have reason to be grateful for an apparent misfortune which had the effect of turning an indolent clubman into one of our foremost writers. At first, like Hazlitt, he turned to art. Like him, too, he quickly forsook art for letters. He contributed to the magazines and joined the staff of *Punch*. His first really important novel was *Vanity Fair*. This was followed by *Pendennis*, *Esmond*, *The Newcomes*, and *The Virginians*. Thackeray died in 1863.

The following essay is taken from *Roundabout Papers*, which first appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*.

OGRES

I DARESAY the reader has remarked that the upright and independent vowel, which stands in the vowel-list between E and O, has formed the subject of the main part of these essays. How does

that vowel feel this morning?—fresh, good-humoured, and lively? The Roundabout lines, which fall from this pen, are correspondingly brisk and cheerful. Has anything, on the contrary, disagreed with the vowel? Has its rest been disturbed, or was yesterday's dinner too good, or yesterday's wine not good enough? Under such circumstances, a darkling, misanthropic tinge, no doubt, is cast upon the paper. The jokes, if attempted, are elaborate and dreary. The bitter temper breaks out. That sneering manner is adopted, which you know, and which exhibits itself so especially when the writer is speaking about women. A moody carelessness comes over him. He sees no good in any body or thing; and treats gentlemen, ladies, history, and things in general, with a like gloomy flippancy. Agreed. When the vowel in question is in that mood; if you like airy gaiety and tender gushing benevolence—if you want to be satisfied with yourself and the rest of your fellow-beings; I recommend you, my dear creature, to go to some other shop in Cornhill, or turn to some other article. There are moods in the mind of the vowel of which we are speaking, when it is ill-conditioned and captious. Who always keeps good health, and good humour? Do not philosophers grumble? Are not sages sometimes out of temper? and do not angel-women go off in tantrums? To-day my mood is dark. I scowl as I dip my pen in the inkstand.

Here is the day come round—for everything here is done with the utmost regularity:—intellectual labour, sixteen hours; meals, thirty-two minutes; exercise, a hundred and forty-eight minutes; conversation with the family, chiefly literary, and about the housekeeping, one hour and four minutes; sleep, three hours and fifteen minutes (at the end of the month, when the Magazine is complete, I own I take eight minutes more); and the rest for the toilette and the world. Well, I say, the *Roundabout Paper Day* being come, and the subject long since settled in my mind, an excellent subject—a most telling, lively, and popular subject—I go to breakfast determined to finish the meal in 9¾ minutes, as usual, and then retire to my desk and work, when—oh, provoking!—here in the paper is the very subject treated, on which I was going to write! Yesterday another paper which I saw treated it—and of course, as I need not tell you, spoiled it. Last Saturday, another paper had an article on the subject; perhaps you may guess what it was—but I won't tell you. Only this is true, my favourite subject, which was about to make the best paper we have had for a long time: my bird, my game that I was going to shoot and serve up with such a delicate sauce, has been found by other sportsmen; and pop, pop, pop, a half-dozen of guns have banged at it, mangled it, and brought it down.

"And can't you take some other text?" say you. All this is mighty

well. But if you have set your heart on a certain dish for dinner, be it cold boiled veal, or what you will; and they bring you turtle and venison, don't you feel disappointed? During your walk you have been making up your mind that that cold meat, with moderation and a pickle, will be a very sufficient dinner: you have accustomed your thoughts to it; and here, in place of it, is a turkey, surrounded by coarse sausages, or a reeking pigeon-pie or a fulsome roast pig. I have known many a good and kind man made furiously angry by such a *contretemps*. I have known him lose his temper, call his wife and servants names, and a whole household made miserable. If, then, as is notoriously the case, it is too dangerous to baulk a man about his dinner, how much more about his article? I came to my meal with an ogre-like appetite and gusto. Fee, faw, fum! Wife, where is that tender little Princekin? Have you trussed him, and did you stuff him nicely, and have you taken care to baste him and do him, not too brown, as I told you? Quick! I am hungry! I begin to whet my knife, to roll my eyes about, and roar and clap my huge chest like a gorilla; and then my poor Ogrina has to tell me that the little princes have all run away, whilst she was in the kitchen, making the paste to bake them in! I pause in the description. I won't condescend to report the bad language, which you know must ensue, when an ogre, whose mind is ill-regulated, and whose habits of self-indulgence are notorious, finds himself disappointed of his greedy hopes. What treatment of his wife, what abuse and brutal behaviour to his children, who, though ogrillons, are children! My dears, you may fancy, and need not ask my delicate pen to describe, the language and behaviour of a vulgar, coarse, greedy, large man with an immense mouth and teeth, which are too frequently employed in the gobbling and crunching of raw man's meat.

And in this circuitous way you see I have reached my present subject, which is, Ogres. You fancy they are dead or only fictitious characters—mythical representatives of strength, cruelty, stupidity, and lust for blood? Though they have seven-leagued boots, you remember all sorts of little whipping-snapping Tom Thumbs used to elude and out-run them. They were so stupid that they gave in to the most shallow ambuscades and artifices: witness that well-known ogre, who, because Jack cut open the hasty-pudding, instantly ripped open his own stupid waistcoat and interior. They were cruel, brutal, disgusting with their sharpened teeth, immense knives, and roaring voices: but they always ended by being overcome by little Tom Thumbkins, or some other smart little champion.

Yes; they were conquered in the end, there is no doubt. They plunged headlong (and uttering the most frightful bad language) into some pit where Jack came with his smart *couteau de chasse* and

whipped their brutal heads off. They would be going to devour maidens,

> But ever when it seemed
> Their need was at the sorest,
> A knight, in armour bright,
> Came riding through the forest.

And down, after a combat, would go the brutal persecutor with a lance through his midriff. Yes, I say, this is very true and well. But you remember that round the ogre's cave, the ground was covered, for hundreds and hundreds of yards, *with the bones of the victims* whom he had lured into the castle. Many knights and maids came to him and perished under his knife and teeth. Were dragons the same as ogres? monsters dwelling in caverns, whence they rushed, attired in plate armour, wielding pikes and torches, and destroying stray passengers who passed by their lair? Monsters, brutes, rapacious tyrants, ruffians, as they were, doubtless they ended by being overcome. But, before they were destroyed, they did a deal of mischief. The bones round their caves were countless. They had sent many brave souls to Hades, before their own fled, howling out of their rascal carcasses, to the same place of gloom.

There is no greater mistake than to suppose that fairies, champions, distressed damsels, and by consequence ogres, have ceased to exist. It may not be *ogreable* to them (pardon the horrible pleasantry, but, as I am writing in the solitude of my chamber, I am grinding my teeth—yelling, roaring, and cursing—brandishing my scissors and paper-cutter, and, as it were, have become an ogre). I say there is no greater mistake than to suppose that ogres have ceased to exist. We all *know* ogres. Their caverns are round us, and about us. There are the castles of several ogres within a mile of the spot where I write. I think some of them suspect I am an ogre myself. I am not: but I know they are. I visit them. I don't mean to say that they take a cold roast prince out of the cupboard, and have a cannibal feast before *me*. But I see the bones lying about the roads to their houses, and in the areas and gardens. Politeness, of course, prevents me from making any remarks; but I know them well enough. One of the ways to know 'em is to watch the scared looks of the ogres' wives and children. They lead an awful life. They are present at dreadful cruelties. In their excesses those ogres will stab about, and kill not only strangers who happen to call in and ask a night's lodging, but they will outrage, murder, and chop up their own kin. We all know ogres, I say, and have been in their dens often. It is not necessary that ogres who ask you to dine should offer their guests the *peculiar dish* which they like. They cannot always get a Tom Thumb family. They eat mutton and beef too; and I daresay even go out to tea, and

invite you to drink it. But I tell you there are numbers of them going about in the world. And now you have my word for it, and this little hint, it is quite curious what an interest society may be made to have for you, by your determining to find out the ogres you meet there.

What does the man mean? says Mrs. Downright, to whom a joke is a very grave thing. I mean, madam, that in the company assembled in your genteel drawing-room, who bow here and there and smirk in white neckcloths, you receive men who elbow through life successfully enough, but who are ogres in private: men wicked, false, rapacious, flattering; cruel hectors at home; smiling courtiers abroad; causing wives, children, servants, parents, to tremble before them, and smiling and bowing as they bid strangers welcome into their castles. I say, there are men who have crunched the bones of victim after victim; in whose closets lie skeletons picked frightfully clean. When these ogres come out into the world, you don't suppose they show their knives, and their great teeth? A neat simple white neckcloth, a merry rather obsequious manner, a cadaverous look, perhaps, now and again, and a rather dreadful grin; but I know ogres very considerably respected: and when you hint to such and such a man, "My dear sir, Mr. Sharpus, whom you appear to like, is, I assure you, a most dreadful cannibal"; the gentleman cries, "Oh, psha, nonsense! Daresay not so black as he is painted. Daresay not worse than his neighbours." We condone everything in this country—private treason, falsehood, flattery, cruelty at home, roguery, and double dealing—What? Do you mean to say in your acquaintance you don't know ogres guilty of countless crimes of fraud and force, and that knowing them you don't shake hands with them; dine with them at your table; and meet them at their own? Depend upon it, in the time when there were real live ogres in real caverns or castles, gobbling up real knights and virgins—when they went into the world—the neighbouring market-town, let us say, or earl's castle; though their nature and reputation were pretty well known, their notorious foibles were never alluded to. You would say, "What, Blunderbore, my boy! How do you do? How well and fresh you look! What's the receipt you have for keeping so young and rosy?" And your wife would softly ask after Mrs. Blunderbore and the dear children. Or it would be, "My dear Humguffin! try that pork. It is home-bred, home-fed, and, I promise you, tender. Tell me if you think it is as good as yours? John, a glass of Burgundy to Colonel Humguffin!" You don't suppose there would be any unpleasant allusions to disagreeable home-reports regarding Humguffin's manner of furnishing his larder? I say we all of us know ogres. We shake hands and dine with ogres. And if inconvenient moralists tell us we are cowards for our pains, we turn round with a *tu quoque*, or

say that we don't meddle with other folk's affairs; that people are much less black than they are painted, and so on. What? Won't half the county go to Ogreham Castle? Won't some of the clergy say grace at dinner? Won't the mothers bring their daughters to dance with the young Rawheads? And if Lady Ogreham happens to die—I won't say to go the way of all flesh, that is too revolting—I say if Ogreham is a widower, do you aver, on your conscience and honour, that mothers will not be found to offer their young girls to supply the lamented lady's place? How stale this misanthropy is! Something must have disagreed with this cynic. Yes, my good woman. I daresay you would like to call another subject. Yes, my fine fellow; ogre at home, supple as a dancing-master abroad, and shaking in thy pumps, and wearing a horrible grin of sham gaiety to conceal thy terror, lest I should point thee out:—thou art prosperous and honoured, art thou? I say thou hast been a tyrant and a robber. Thou hast plundered the poor. Thou hast bullied the weak. Thou hast laid violent hands on the goods of the innocent and confiding. Thou hast made a prey of the meek and gentle who asked for thy protection. Thou hast been hard to thy kinsfolk, and cruel to thy family. Go, monster! Ah, when shall little Jack come and drill daylight through thy wicked cannibal carcass? I see the ogre pass on, bowing right and left to the company; and he gives a dreadful sidelong glance of suspicion as he is talking to my lord bishop in the corner there.

Ogres in our days need not be giants at all. In former times, and in children's books, where it is necessary to paint your moral in such large letters that there can be no mistake about it, ogres are made with that enormous mouth and *ratelier* which you know of, and with which they can swallow down a baby, almost without using that great knife which they always carry. They are too cunning nowadays. They go about in society, slim, small, quietly dressed, and showing no especially great appetite. In my own young days there used to be play ogres—men who would devour a young fellow in one sitting, and leave him without a bit of flesh on his bones. They were quiet gentlemanlike-looking people. They got the young fellow into their cave. Champagne, *pâté de foie gras,* and numberless good-things, were handed about; and then, having eaten, the young man was devoured in his turn. I believe these card and dice ogres have died away almost as entirely as the hasty-pudding giants whom Tom Thumb overcame. Now, there are ogres in City courts who lure you into their dens. About our Cornish mines I am told there are many most plausible ogres, who tempt you into their caverns and pick your bones there. In a certain newspaper there used to be lately a whole column of advertisements from ogres who would put on the most plausible, nay, piteous appearance, in order to inveigle their victims. You would

read, "A tradesman, established for seventy years in the City, and known, and much respected by Messrs. N. M. Rothschild and Baring Brothers, has pressing need for three pounds until next Saturday. He can give security for half a million, and forty thousand pounds will be given for the use of the loan," and so on; or, "An influential body of capitalists are about to establish a company, of which the business will be enormous and the profits proportionately prodigious. They will require A SECRETARY, of good address and appearance, at a salary of two thousand per annum. He need not be able to write, but address and manners are absolutely necessary. As a mark of confidence in the company, he will have to deposit," &c.; or, "A young widow (of pleasing manners and appearance) who has a pressing necessity for four pounds ten for three weeks, offers her Erard's grand piano valued at three hundred guineas; a diamond cross of eight hundred pounds; and board and lodging in her elegant villa near Banbury Cross, with the best references and society, in return for the loan." I suspect these people are ogres. There are ogres and ogres. Polyphemus was a great, tall, one-eyed, notorious ogre, fetching his victims out of a hole, and gobbling them one after another. There could be no mistake about him. But so were the Sirens ogres—pretty blue-eyed things, peeping at you coaxingly from out of the water, and singing their melodious wheedles. And the bones round their caves were more numerous than the ribs, skulls, and thigh-bones round the cavern of hulking Polypheme.

To the castle-gates of some of these monsters up rides the dapper champion of the pen; puffs boldly upon the horn which hangs by the chain; enters the hall resolutely, and challenges the big tyrant sulking within. We defy him to combat, the enormous roaring ruffian! We give him a meeting on the green plain before his castle. Green? No wonder it should be green: it is manured with human bones. After a few graceful wheels and curvets, we take our ground. We stoop over our saddle. 'Tis but to kiss the locket of our lady-love's hair. And now the vizor is up: the lance is in rest (Gillott's iron is the point for me). A touch of the spur in the gallant sides of Pegasus, and we gallop at the great brute.

"Cut off his ugly head, Flibbertygibbet, my squire!" And who are these who pour out of the castle? the imprisoned maidens, the maltreated widows, the poor old hoary grandfathers, who have been locked up in the dungeons these scores and scores of years, writhing under the tyranny of that ruffian! Ah! ye knights of the pen! May honour be your shield and truth tip your lances! Be gentle to all gentle people. Be modest to women. Be tender to children. And as for the Ogre Humbug, out sword, and have at him.

* * *

CHARLES DICKENS

"I took a great deal o' pains with his eddication, Sir," said Tony Weller concerning his son, "let him run in the street when he was wery young and shift for hisself."

There is an autobiographical touch here. Charles Dickens, who was born in 1812, had an education that was of the most irregular kind. A year or two at a school in Chatham, a term in a London blacking warehouse, two years more at school, followed by a junior clerkship and reading at the British Museum—all these gave Dickens that wealth of experience which he was afterward to turn to such good purpose. It is of interest to note that he began as an essayist and his first book, *Sketches by Boz*, by attracting the notice of Chapman and Hall, gave him the chance of writing *The Pickwick Papers*. After this novels followed in quick succession. *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Barnaby Rudge*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Dombey and Son*, *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, *Little Dorrit*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend*, and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, being the chief of these. Dickens died in 1870.

The following sketch was taken from *The Uncommercial Traveller* and exemplifies the author's intimate knowledge of London.

THE CITY OF THE ABSENT

WHEN I think I deserve particularly well of myself, and have earned the right to enjoy a little treat, I stroll from Covent-garden into the City of London, after business-hours there, on a Saturday, or—better yet—on a Sunday, and roam about its deserted nooks and corners. It is necessary to the full enjoyment of these journeys that they should be made in summer-time, for then the retired spots that I love to haunt, are at their idlest and dullest. A gentle fall of rain is not objectionable, and a warm mist sets off my favourite retreats to decided advantage.

Among these, City Churchyards hold a high place. Such strange churchyards hide in the City of London; churchyards sometimes so entirely detached from churches, always so pressed upon by houses; so small, so rank, so silent, so forgotten, except by the few people who ever look down into them from their smoky windows. As I stand peeping in through the iron gates and rails, I can peel the rusty metal off, like bark from an old tree. The illegible tombstones are all lopsided, the grave-mounds lost their shape in the rains of a hundred years ago, the Lombardy Poplar or Plane-Tree that was once a dry-salter's daughter and several common-councilmen, has withered like

those worthies, and its departed leaves are dust beneath it. Contagion of slow ruin overhangs the place. The discoloured tiled roofs of the environing buildings stand so awry, that they can hardly be proof against any stress of weather. Old crazy stacks of chimneys seem to look down as they overhang, dubiously calculating how far they will have to fall. In an angle of the walls, what was once the tool-house of the gravedigger rots away, encrusted with toadstools. Pipes and spouts for carrying off the rain from the encompassing gables, broken or feloniously cut for old lead long ago, now let the rain drip and splash as it list, upon the weedy earth. Sometimes there is a rusty pump somewhere near, and, as I look in at the rails and meditate, I hear it working under an unknown hand with a creaking protest: as though the departed in the churchyard urged, "Let us lie here in peace; don't suck us up and drink us!"

One of my best beloved churchyards, I call the churchyard of Saint Ghastly Grim; touching what men in general call it, I have no information. It lies at the heart of the City, and the Blackwall Railway shrieks at it daily. It is a small small churchyard, with a ferocious strong spiked iron gate, like a jail. This gate is ornamented with skulls and crossbones, larger than the life, wrought in stone; but it likewise came into the mind of Saint Ghastly Grim, that to stick iron spikes a-top of the stone skulls, as though they were impaled, would be a pleasant device. Therefore the skulls grin aloft horribly, thrust through and through with iron spears. Hence, there is attraction of repulsion for me in Saint Ghastly Grim, and, having often contemplated it in the daylight and the dark, I once felt drawn towards it in a thunder-storm at midnight. "Why not?" I said, in self-excuse. "I have been to see the Colosseum by the light of the moon; is it worse to go to see Saint Ghastly Grim by the light of the lightning?" I repaired to the Saint in a hackney cab, and found the skulls most effective, having the air of a public execution, and seeming, as the lightning flashed, to wink and grin with the pain of the spikes. Having no other person to whom to impart my satisfaction, I communicated it to the driver. So far from being responsive, he surveyed me—he was naturally a bottle-nosed, red-faced man—with a blanched countenance. And as he drove me back, he ever and again glanced in over his shoulder through the little front window of his carriage, as mistrusting that I was a fare originally from a grave in the churchyard of Saint Ghastly Grim, who might have flitted home again without paying.

Sometimes, the queer Hall of some queer Company gives upon a churchyard such as this, and, when the Livery dine, you may hear them (if you are looking in through the iron rails, which you never are when I am) toasting their own Worshipful prosperity. Sometimes, a wholesale house of business, requiring much room for stowage, will occupy one or two or even all three sides of the enclosing space, and the backs

of bales of goods will lumber up the windows, as if they were holding some crowded trade-meeting of themselves within. Sometimes, the commanding windows are all blank, and show no more sign of life than the graves below—not so much, for *they* tell of what once upon a time was life undoubtedly. Such was the surrounding of one City churchyard that I saw last summer, on a Volunteering Saturday evening towards eight of the clock, when with astonishment I beheld an old old man and an old old woman in it, making hay! Yes, of all occupations in this world, making hay! It was a very confined patch of churchyard lying between Gracechurch-street and the Tower, capable of yielding, say an apronful of hay. By what means the old old man and woman got into it, with an almost toothless hay-making rake, I could not fathom. No open window was within view; no window at all was within view, sufficiently near the ground to have enabled their old legs to descend from it; the rusty churchyard-gate was locked, the mouldy church was locked. Gravely among the graves, they made hay, all alone by themselves. They looked like Time and his wife. There was but the one rake between them, and they both had hold of it in a pastorally-loving manner, and there was hay on the old woman's black bonnet, as if the old man had recently been playful. The old man was quite an obsolete old man, in knee-breeches and coarse grey stockings, and the old woman wore mittens like unto his stockings in texture and in colour. They took no heed of me as I looked on, unable to account for them. The old woman was much too bright for a pew-opener, the old man much too meek for a beadle. On an old tombstone in the foreground between me and them, were two cherubim; but for those celestial embellishments being represented as having no possible use for knee-breeches, stockings, or mittens, I should have compared them with the hay-makers, and sought a likeness. I coughed and awoke the echoes, but the hay-makers never looked at me. They used the rake with a measured action, drawing the scanty crop towards them; and so I was fain to leave them under three yards and a half of darkening sky, gravely making hay among the graves, all alone by themselves. Perhaps they were Spectres, and I wanted a Medium.

In another City churchyard of similar cramped dimensions, I saw, that selfsame summer, two comfortable charity children. They were making love—tremendous proof of the vigour of that immortal article, for they were in the graceful uniform under which English Charity delights to hide herself—and they were overgrown, and their legs (his legs at least, for I am modestly incompetent to speak of hers) were as much in the wrong as mere passive weakness of character can render legs. O it was a leaden churchyard, but no doubt a golden ground to those young persons! I first saw them on a Saturday evening, and, perceiving from their occupation that Saturday evening was their trysting-time, I returned that evening se'nnight, and renewed the con-

templation of them. They came there to shake the bits of matting which were spread in the church aisles, and they afterwards rolled them up, he rolling his end, she rolling hers, until they met, and over the two once divided now united rolls—sweet emblem!—gave and received a chaste salute. It was so refreshing to find one of my faded churchyards blooming into flower thus, that I returned a second time, and a third, and ultimately this befell:—They had left the church door open, in their dusting and arranging. Walking in to look at the church, I became aware, by the dim light, of him in the pulpit, of her in the reading-desk, of him looking down, of her looking up, exchanging tender discourse. Immediately both dived, and became as it were non-existent on this sphere. With an assumption of innocence I turned to leave the sacred edifice, when an obese form stood in the portal, puffily demanding Joseph, or in default of Joseph, Celia. Taking this monster by the sleeve, and luring him forth on pretence of showing him whom he sought, I gave time for the emergence of Joseph and Celia, who presently came towards us in the churchyard, bending under dusty matting, a picture of thriving and unconscious industry. It would be superfluous to hint that I have ever since deemed this the proudest passage in my life.

But such instances, or any tokens of vitality, are rare indeed in my City churchyards. A few sparrows occasionally try to raise a lively chirrup in their solitary tree—perhaps, as taking a different view of worms from that entertained by humanity—but they are flat and hoarse of voice, like the clerk, the organ, the bell, the clergyman, and all the rest of the Church-works when they are wound up for Sunday. Caged larks, thrushes, or blackbirds, hanging in neighbouring courts, pour forth their strains passionately, as scenting the tree, trying to break out, and see leaves again before they die, but their song is Willow, Willow—of a churchyard cast. So little light lives inside the churches of my churchyards, when the two are co-existent, that it is often only by an accident and after long acquaintance that I discover their having stained glass in some odd window. The westering sun slants into the churchyard by some unwonted entry, a few prismatic tears drop on an old tombstone, and a window that I thought was only dirty, is for the moment all bejewelled. Then the light passes and the colours die. Though even then, if there be room enough for me to fall back so far as that I can gaze up to the top of the Church Tower, I see the rusty vane new burnished, and seeming to look out with a joyful flash over the sea of smoke at the distant shore of country.

Blinking old men who are let out of workhouses by the hour, have a tendency to sit on bits of coping stone in these churchyards, leaning with both hands on their sticks and asthmatically gasping. The more depressed class of beggars too, bring hither broken meats, and munch. I am on nodding terms with a meditative turncock who lingers in one

of them, and whom I suspect of a turn for poetry; the rather, as he looks out of temper when he gives the fire-plug a disparaging wrench with that large tuning-fork of his which would wear out the shoulder of his coat, but for a precautionary piece of inlaid leather. Fire-ladders, which I am satisfied nobody knows anything about, and the keys of which were lost in ancient times, moulder away in the larger churchyards, under eaves like wooden eyebrows; and so removed are those corners from the haunts of men and boys, that once on a fifth of November I found a "Guy" trusted to take care of himself there, while his proprietors had gone to dinner. Of the expression of his face I cannot report, because it was turned to the wall; but his shrugged shoulders and his ten extended fingers, appeared to denote that he had moralized in his little straw chair on the mystery of mortality until he gave it up as a bad job.

You do not come upon these churchyards violently; there are shades of transition in the neighbourhood. An antiquated news shop, or barber's shop, apparently bereft of customers in the earlier days of George the Third, would warn me to look out for one, if any discoveries in this respect were left for me to make. A very quiet court, in combination with an unaccountable dyer's and scourer's, would prepare me for a churchyard. An exceedingly retiring public-house, with a bagatelle-board shadily visible in a sawdusty parlour shaped like an omnibus, and with a shelf of punch-bowls in the bar, would apprise me that I stood near consecrated ground. A "Dairy," exhibiting in its modest window one very little milk-can and three eggs, would suggest to me the certainty of finding the poultry hard by, pecking at my forefathers. I first inferred the vicinity of Saint Ghastly Grim, from a certain air of extra repose and gloom pervading a vast stack of warehouses.

From the hush of these places, it is congenial to pass into the hushed resorts of business. Down the lanes I like to see the carts and waggons huddled together in repose, the cranes idle, and the warehouses shut. Passing in the alleys behind the closed Banks of mighty Lombard-street, it gives one as good as a rich feeling to think of the broad counters with a rim along the edge, made for telling money out on, the scales for weighing precious metals, the ponderous ledgers, and, above all, the bright copper shovels for shovelling gold. When I draw money, it never seems so much money as when it is shovelled at me out of a bright copper shovel. I like to say, "In gold," and to see seven pounds musically pouring out of the shovel, like seventy;—the Bank appearing to remark to me—I italicize *appearing*—"if you want more of this yellow earth, we keep it in barrows at your service." To think of the banker's clerk with his deft finger turning the crisp edges of the Hundred-Pound Notes he has taken in a fat roll out of a drawer, is again to hear the rustling of that delicious south-cash wind. "How

will you have it?" I once heard this usual question asked at a Bank Counter of an elderly female, habited in mourning and steeped in simplicity, who answered, open-eyed, crook-fingered, laughing with expectation, "Anyhow!" Calling these things to mind as I stroll among the Banks, I wonder whether the other solitary Sunday man I pass, has designs upon the Banks. For the interest and mystery of the matter, I almost hope he may have, and that his confederate may be at this moment taking impressions of the keys of the iron closets in wax, and that a delightful robbery may be in course of transaction. About College-hill, Mark-lane, and so on towards the Tower, and Dockward, the deserted wine-merchants' cellars are fine subjects for consideration; but the deserted money-cellars of the Bankers, and their plate-cellars, and their jewel-cellars, what subterranean regions of the Wonderful Lamp are these! And again: possibly some shoeless boy in rags passed through this street yesterday, for whom it is reserved to be a Banker in the fulness of time, and to be surpassing rich. Such reverses have been, since the days of Whittington; and were, long before. I want to know whether the boy has any foreglittering of that glittering fortune now, when he treads these stones, hungry. Much as I also want to know whether the next man to be hanged at Newgate yonder, had any suspicion upon him that he was moving steadily towards that fate, when he talked so much about the last man who paid the same great debt at the same small Debtors' Door.

Where are all the people who on busy working-days pervade these scenes? The locomotive banker's clerk, who carries a black portfolio chained to him by a chain of steel, where is he? Does he go to bed with his chain on—to church with his chain on—or does he lay it by? And if he lays it by, what becomes of his portfolio when he is unchained for a holiday? The wastepaper baskets of these closed counting-houses would let me into many hints of business matters if I had the exploration of them; and what secrets of the heart should I discover on the "pads" of the young clerks—the sheets of cartridge-paper and blotting-paper interposed between their writing and their desks! Pads are taken into confidence on the tenderest occasions, and oftentimes when I have made a business visit, and have sent in my name from the outer office, have I had it forced on my discursive notice that the officiating young gentleman has over and over again inscribed AMELIA, in ink of various dates, on corners of his pad. Indeed, the pad may be regarded as the legitimate modern successor of the old forest-tree: whereon these young knights (having no attainable forest nearer than Epping) engrave the names of their mistresses. After all, it is a more satisfactory process than carving, and can be oftener repeated. So these courts in their Sunday rest are courts of Love Omnipotent (I rejoice to bethink myself), dry as they look. And here is Garraway's,

bolted and shuttered hard and fast! It is possible to imagine the man who cuts the sandwiches, on his back in a hayfield; it is possible to imagine his desk, like the desk of a clerk at church, without him; but imagination is unable to pursue the men who wait at Garraway's all the week for the men who never come. When they are forcibly put out of Garraway's on Saturday night—which they must be, for they never would go out of their own accord—where do they vanish until Monday morning? On the first Sunday that I ever strayed here, I expected to find them hovering about these lanes, like restless ghosts, and trying to peep into Garraway's through chinks in the shutters, if not endeavouring to turn the lock of the door with false keys, picks, and screw-drivers. But the wonder is, that they go clean away! And now I think of it, the wonder is, that every working-day pervader of these scenes goes clean away. The man who sells the dogs' collars and the little toy coal-scuttles feels under as great an obligation to go afar off, as Glyn and Co., or Smith, Payne, and Smith. There is an old monastery-crypt under Garraway's (I have been in it among the port-wine), and perhaps Garraway's, taking pity on the mouldy men who wait in its public-room all their lives, gives them cool house-room down there over Sundays; but the catacombs of Paris would not be large enough to hold the rest of the missing. This characteristic of London City greatly helps its being the quaint place it is in the weekly pause of business, and greatly helps my Sunday sensation in it of being the Last Man. In my solitude, the ticket-porters being all gone with the rest, I venture to breathe to the quiet bricks and stones my confidential wonderment why a ticket-porter, who never does any work with his hands, is bound to wear a white apron, and why a great Ecclesiastical Dignitary, who never does any work with his hands either, is equally bound to wear a black one.

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SIR ARTHUR HELPS

Born in 1813 and educated at Eton and Cambridge, Helps occupied various official posts, beginning as private secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ending as Clerk to the Privy Council. At the university his passion for general reading prevented him from attaining the highest honours. While there he wrote *Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd*—a collection of maxims and aphorisms. He was, with Tennyson, Maurice, and Hallam, one of the brilliant band known as "The Apostles." In "the intervals of business" he wrote a number of books including histories, fables, and plays, but he is best remembered by the volumes of *Friends in Council* which contain essays in a kind of dramatic setting. A few friends meet at intervals and take it in turn to read essays which, afterward, they discuss. This particular

form enabled Helps to set forth his wise tolerance and sound judgment. He died in 1875.

The following essay is taken from *Friends in Council.*

ON THE ART OF LIVING WITH OTHERS

THE *Iliad* for war; the *Odyssey* for wandering; but where is the great domestic epic? Yet it is but commonplace to say, that passions may rage round a tea-table, which would not have misbecome men dashing at one another in war-chariots; and evolutions of patience and temper are performed at the fireside, worthy to be compared with the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Men have worshipped some fantastic being for living alone in a wilderness; but social martyrdoms place no saints upon the calendar.

We may blind ourselves to it if we like, but the hatreds and disgusts that there are behind friendship, relationship, service, and, indeed, proximity of all kinds, is one of the darkest spots upon earth. The various relations of life, which bring people together, cannot, as we know, be perfectly fulfilled except in a state where there will, perhaps, be no occasion for any of them. It is no harm, however, to endeavour to see whether there are any methods which may make these relations in the least degree more harmonious now.

In the first place, if people are to live happily together, they must not fancy, because they are thrown together now, that all their lives have been exactly similar up to the present time, that they started exactly alike, and that they are to be for the future of the same mind. A thorough conviction of the difference of men is the great thing to be assured of in social knowledge: it is to life what Newton's law is to astronomy. Sometimes men have a knowledge of it with regard to the world in general: they do not expect the outer world to agree with them in all points, but are vexed at not being able to drive their own tastes and opinions into those they live with. Diversities distress them. They will not see that there are many forms of virtue and wisdom. Yet we might as well say, "Why all these stars; why this difference; why not all one star?"

Many of the rules for people living together in peace follow from the above. For instance, not to interfere unreasonably with others, not to ridicule their tastes, not to question and re-question their resolves, not to indulge in perpetual comment on their proceedings, and to delight in their having other pursuits than ours, are all based upon a thorough perception of the simple fact that they are not we.

Another rule for living happily with others is to avoid having stock subjects of disputation. It mostly happens, when people live much together, that they come to have certain set topics, around which, from

frequent dispute, there is such a growth of angry words, mortified vanity, and the like, that the original subject of difference becomes a standing subject for quarrel; and there is a tendency in all minor disputes to drift down to it.

Again, if people wish to live well together, they must not hold too much to logic, and suppose that everything is to be settled by sufficient reason. Dr. Johnson saw this clearly with regard to married people, when he said, "Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason every morning all the minute detail of a domestic day." But the application should be much more general than he made it. There is no time for such reasonings, and nothing that is worth them. And when we recollect how two lawyers, or two politicians, can go on contending, and that there is no end of one-sided reasoning on any subject, we shall not be sure that such contention is the best mode for arriving at truth. But certainly it is not the way to arrive at good temper.

If you would be loved as a companion, avoid unnecessary criticism upon those with whom you live. The number of people who have taken out judges' patents for themselves is very large in any society. Now it would be hard for a man to live with another who was always criticizing his actions, even if it were kindly and just criticism. It would be like living between the glasses of a microscope. But these self-elected judges, like their prototypes, are very apt to have the persons they judge brought before them in the guise of culprits.

One of the most provoking forms of the criticism above alluded to is that which may be called criticism over the shoulder. "Had I been consulted," "Had you listened to me," "But you always will," and such short scraps of sentences may remind many of us of dissertations which we have suffered and inflicted, and of which we cannot call to mind any soothing effect.

Another rule is, not to let familiarity swallow up all courtesy. Many of us have a habit of saying to those with whom we live such things as we say about strangers behind their backs. There is no place, however, where real politeness is of more value than where we mostly think it would be superfluous. You may say more truth, or rather speak out more plainly, to your associates, but not less courteously than you do to strangers.

Again, we must not expect more from the society of our friends and companions than it can give, and especially must not expect contrary things. It is something arrogant to talk of travelling over other minds (mind being, for what we know, infinite); but still we become familiar with the upper views, tastes, and tempers of our associates. And it is hardly in man to estimate justly what is familiar to him. In travelling along at night, as Hazlitt says, we catch a glimpse into cheerful-looking

rooms with light blazing in them, and we conclude involuntarily how happy the inmates must be. Yet there is heaven and hell in those rooms—the same heaven and hell that we have known in others.

There are two great classes of promoters of social happiness—cheerful people, and people who have some reticence. The latter are more secure benefits to society even than the former. They are non-conductors of all the heats and animosities around them. To have peace in a house, or a family, or any social circle, the members of it must beware of passing on hasty and uncharitable speeches, which, the whole of the context seldom being told, is often not conveying but creating mischief. They must be very good people to avoid doing this; for let Human Nature say what it will, it likes sometimes to look on at a quarrel, and that not altogether from ill-nature, but from a love of excitement, for the same reason that Charles II liked to attend the debates in the Lords, because they were "as good as a play."

We come now to the consideration of temper, which might have been expected to be treated first. But to cut off the means and causes of bad temper is, perhaps, of as much importance as any direct dealing with the temper itself. Besides, it is probable that in small social circles there is more suffering from unkindness than ill-temper. Anger is a thing that those who live under us suffer more from than those who live with us. But all the forms of ill-humour and sour-sensitiveness, which especially belong to equal intimacy (though, indeed, they are common to all), are best to be met by impassiveness. When two sensitive persons are shut up together, they go on vexing each other with a reproductive irritability. But sensitive and hard people get on well together. The supply of temper is not altogether out of the usual laws of supply and demand.

Intimate friends and relations should be careful when they go out into the world together, or admit others to their own circle, that they do not make a bad use of the knowledge which they have gained of each other by their intimacy. Nothing is more common than this, and did it not mostly proceed from mere carelessness, it would be superlatively ungenerous. You seldom need wait for the written life of a man to hear about his weaknesses, or what are supposed to be such, if you know his intimate friends, or meet him in company with them.

Lastly, in conciliating those we live with, it is most surely done, not by consulting their interests, nor by giving way to their opinions, so much as by not offending their tastes. The most refined part of us lies in this region of taste, which is perhaps a result of our whole being rather than a part of our nature, and, at any rate, is the region of our most subtle sympathies and antipathies.

It may be said that if the great principles of Christianity were attended to, all such rules, suggestions, and observations as the above would be needless. True enough! Great principles are at the bottom of all things; but to apply them to daily life, many little rules, precautions, and insights are needed. Such things hold a middle place between real life and principles, as form does between matter and spirit, moulding the one and expressing the other.

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GEORGE ELIOT

Mary Ann Evans was born in 1819. She began her literary career at the age of twenty-five with a translation of Strauss's *Life of Jesus* and later she became connected with *The Westminster Review*. Under the name of George Eliot she began to write for *Blackwood's Magazine* the three stories which were later published as *Scenes from Clerical Life*. This book was well received and George Eliot followed up and enhanced this success with *Adam Bede*. *The Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner*, *Romola*, *Felix Holt the Radical*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda* came after. George Eliot died in 1880.

The following essay is taken from *Impressions of Theophrastus Such*.

ONLY TEMPER

WHAT is temper? Its primary meaning, the proportion and mode in which qualities are mingled, is much neglected in popular speech, yet ever here the word often carries a reference to an habitual state or general tendency of the organism in distinction from what are held to be specific virtues and vices. As people confess to bad memory without expecting to sink in mental reputation, so we hear a man declared to have a bad temper and yet glorified as the possessor of every high quality. When he errs or in any way commits himself, his temper is accused, not his character, and it is understood that but for a brutal bearish mood he is kindness itself. If he kicks small animals, swears violently at a servant who mistakes orders, or is grossly rude to his wife, it is remarked apologetically that these things mean nothing—they are all temper.

Certainly there is a limit to this form of apology, and the forgery of a bill, or the ordering of goods without any prospect of paying for them, has never been set down to an unfortunate habit of sulkiness or of irascibility. But on the whole there is a peculiar exercise of indulgence towards the manifestations of bad temper which tends to encourage them, so that we are in danger of having among us a number

of virtuous persons who conduct themselves detestably, just as we have hysterical patients who, with sound organs, are apparently labouring under many sorts of organic disease. Let it be admitted, however, that a man may be "a good fellow" and yet have a bad temper, so bad that we recognize his merits with reluctance, and are inclined to resent his occasionally amiable behaviour as an unfair demand on our admiration.

Touchwood is that kind of good fellow. He is by turns insolent, quarrelsome, repulsively haughty to innocent people who approach him with respect, neglectful of his friends, angry in face of legitimate demands, procrastinating in the fulfilment of such demands, prompted to rude words and harsh looks by a moody disgust with his fellow-men in general—and yet as everybody will assure you, the soul of honour, a steadfast friend, a defender of the oppressed, an affectionate-hearted creature. Pity that, after a certain experience of his moods, his intimacy becomes insupportable! A man who uses his balmorals to tread on your toes with much frequency and an unmistakable emphasis may prove a fast friend in adversity, but meanwhile your adversity has not arrived and your toes are tender. The daily sneer or growl at your remarks is not to be made amends for by a possible eulogy or defence of your understanding against depreciators who may not present themselves, and on an occasion which may never arise. I cannot submit to a chronic state of blue and green bruise as a form of insurance against an accident.

Touchwood's bad temper is of the contradicting pugnacious sort. He is the honourable gentleman in opposition, whatever proposal or proposition may be broached, and when others join him he secretly damns their superfluous agreement, quickly discovering that his way of stating the case is not exactly theirs. An invitation or any sign of expectation throws him into an attitude of refusal. Ask his concurrence in a benevolent measure: he will not decline to give it, because he has a real sympathy with good aims; but he complies resentfully, though where he is let alone he will do much more than anyone would have thought of asking for. No man would shrink with greater sensitiveness from the imputation of not paying his debts, yet when a bill is sent in with any promptitude he is inclined to make the tradesman wait for the money he is in such a hurry to get. One sees that this antagonistic temper must be much relieved by finding a particular object, and that its worst moments must be those where the mood is that of vague resistance, there being nothing specific to oppose. Touchwood is never so little engaging as when he comes down to breakfast with a cloud on his brow, after parting from you the night before with an affectionate effusiveness at the end of a confidential conversation which has assured you of mutual understanding. Impossible that you can have committed any offence. If mice have disturbed him, that is not your fault; but, nevertheless, your cheerful greeting had better not convey

any reference to the weather, else it will be met by a sneer which, taking you unawares, may give you a crushing sense that you make a poor figure with your cheerfulness, which was not asked for. Some daring person perhaps introduces another topic, and uses the delicate flattery of appealing to Touchwood for his opinion, the topic being included in his favourite studies. An indistinct muttering, with a look at the carving-knife in reply, teaches that daring person how ill he has chosen a market for his deference. If Touchwood's behaviour affects you very closely you had better break your leg in the course of the day: his mad temper will then vanish at once; he will take a painful journey on your behalf; he will sit up with you night after night; he will do all the work of your department so as to save you from any loss in consequence of your accident; he will be even uniformly tender to you till you are well on your legs again, when he will some fine morning insult you without provocation, and make you wish that his generous goodness to you had not closed your lips against retort.

It is not always necessary that a friend should break his leg, for Touchwood to feel compunction and endeavour to make amends for his bearishness or insolence. He becomes spontaneously conscious that he has misbehaved, and he is not only ashamed of himself, but has the better prompting to try and heal any wound he has inflicted. Unhappily the habit of being offensive "without meaning it" leads usually to a way of making amends which the injured person cannot but regard as a being amiable without meaning it. The kindnesses, the complimentary indications or assurances, are apt to appear in the light of a penance adjusted to the foregoing lapses, and by the very contrast they offer call up a keener memory of the wrong they atone for. They are not a spontaneous prompting of goodwill, but an elaborate compensation. And, in fact, Dion's atoning friendliness has a ring of artificiality. Because he formerly disguised his good feeling towards you he now expresses more than he quite feels. It is in vain. Having made you extremely uncomfortable last week he has absolutely diminished his power of making you happy to-day: he struggles against this result by excessive effort, but he has taught you to observe his fitfulness rather than to be warmed by his episodic show of regard.

I suspect that many persons who have an uncertain, incalculable temper flatter themselves that it enhances their fascination; but perhaps they are under the prior mistake of exaggerating the charm which they suppose to be thus strengthened; in any case they will do well not to trust in the attractions of caprice and moodiness for a long continuance or for close intercourse. A pretty woman may fan the flame of distant adorers by harassing them, but if she lets one of them make her his wife, the point of view from which he will look at her poutings and tossings and mysterious inability to be pleased will be seriously altered.

And if slavery to a pretty woman, which seems among the least conditional forms of abject service, will not bear too great a strain from her bad temper even though her beauty remain the same, it is clear that a man whose claims lie in his high character or high performances had need impress us very constantly with his peculiar value and indispensableness, if he is to test our patience by an uncertainty of temper which leaves us absolutely without grounds for guessing how he will receive our persons or humbly advanced opinions, or what line he will take on any but the most momentous occasions.

For it is among the repulsive effects of this bad temper, which is supposed to be compatible with shining virtues, that it is apt to determine a man's sudden adhesion to an opinion, whether on a personal or impersonal matter, without leaving him time to consider his grounds. The adhesion is sudden and momentary, but it either forms a precedent for his line of thought and action, or it is presently seen to have been inconsistent with his true mind. This determination of partisanship by temper has its worst effects in the career of the public man, who is always in danger of getting so enthralled by his own words that he looks into facts and questions not to get rectifying knowledge, but to get evidence that will justify his actual attitude which was assumed under an impulse dependent on something else than knowledge. There has been plenty of insistence on the evil of swearing by the words of a master, and having the judgment uniformly controlled by a "He said it"; but a much worse woe to befall a man is to have every judgment controlled by an "I said it"—to make a divinity of his own short-sightedness or passion-led aberration and explain the world in its honour. There is hardly a more pitiable degradation than this for a man of high gifts. Hence I cannot join with those who wish that Touchwood, being young enough to enter on public life, should get elected for Parliament and use his excellent abilities to serve his country in that conspicuous manner. For hitherto, in the less momentous incidents of private life, his capricious temper has only produced the minor evil of inconsistency, and he is even greatly at ease in contradicting himself, provided he can contradict you, and disappoint any smiling expectation you may have shown that the impressions you are uttering are likely to meet with his sympathy, considering that the day before he himself gave you the example which your mind is following. He is at least free from those fetters of self-justification which are the curse of parliamentary speaking, and what I rather desire for him is that he should produce the great book which he is generally pronounced capable of writing, and put his best self imperturbably on record for the advantage of society; because I should then have steady ground for bearing with his diurnal incalculableness, and could fix my gratitude as by a strong staple to that unvarying monumental service. Unhappily, Touchwood's great powers have been only so far manifested as to

be believed in, not demonstrated. Everybody rates them highly, and thinks that whatever he chose to do would be done in a first-rate manner. Is it his love of disappointing complacent expectancy which has gone so far as to keep up this lamentable negation, and made him resolve not to write the comprehensive work which he would have written if nobody had expected it of him?

One can see that if Touchwood were to become a public man and take to frequent speaking on platforms or from his seat in the House, it would hardly be possible for him to maintain much integrity of opinion, or to avoid courses of partisanship which a healthy public sentiment would stamp with discredit. Say that he were endowed with the purest honesty, it would inevitably be dragged captive by this mysterious, Protean bad temper. There would be the fatal public necessity of justifying oratorical Temper which had got on its legs in its bitter mood and made insulting imputations, or of keeping up some decent show of consistency with opinions vented out of Temper's contradictoriness. And words would have to be followed up by acts of adhesion.

Certainly if a bad-tempered man can be admirably virtuous, he must be so under extreme difficulties. I doubt the possibility that a high order of character can coexist with a temper like Touchwood's. For it is of the nature of such temper to interrupt the formation of healthy mental habits, which depend on a growing harmony between perception, conviction, and impulse. There may be good feelings, good deeds —for a human nature may pack endless varieties and blessed inconsistencies in its windings—but it is essential to what is worthy to be called high character, that it may be safely calculated on, and that its qualities shall have taken the form of principles or laws habitually, if not perfectly, obeyed.

If a man frequently passes unjust judgments, takes up false attitudes, intermits his acts of kindness with rude behaviour or cruel words, and falls into the consequent vulgar error of supposing that he can make amends by laboured agreeableness, I cannot consider such courses any the less ugly because they are ascribed to "temper." Especially I object to the assumption that his having a fundamentally good disposition is either an apology or a compensation for his bad behaviour. If his temper yesterday made him lash the horses, upset the curricle, and cause a breakage in my rib, I feel it no compensation that to-day he vows he will drive me anywhere in the gentlest manner any day as long as he lives. Yesterday was what it was, my rib is paining me, it is not a main object of my life to be driven by Touchwood—and I have no confidence in his lifelong gentleness. The utmost form of placability I am capable of is to try and remember his better deeds already performed, and, mindful of my own offences, to bear him no malice. But I cannot accept his amends.

If the bad-tempered man wants to apologize he had need to do it on a large public scale, make some beneficent discovery, produce some stimulating work of genius, invent some powerful process—prove himself such a good to contemporary multitudes and future generations, as to make the discomfort he causes his friends and acquaintances a vanishing quantity, a trifle even in their own estimate.

* * *

ANDREW LANG

ANDREW LANG, who was born in 1844 and died in 1912, was a close friend of Stevenson and shared his many-sided interests. As an essayist he shows the qualities of charm, humour, and sound common sense. His books for children are a never-failing delight and his researches into folk-lore are full of interest. He was a poet as well as a biographer and he loved exploring the by-ways of history. His one-volume *History of English Literature* is a model of its kind. Rarely has such a stylist set himself to cover the whole field of English letters in a manner so thoroughly competent.

The following essay is reprinted from *Essays in Little* by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd.

JOHN BUNYAN

DR. JOHNSON once took Bishop Percy's little daughter on his knee, and asked her what she thought of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The child answered that she had not read it. "No?" replied the Doctor; "then I would not give one farthing for you," and he set her down and took no further notice of her.

This story, if true, proves that the Doctor was rather intolerant. We must not excommunicate people because they have not our taste in books. The majority of people do not care for books at all.

There is a descendant of John Bunyan's alive now, or there was lately, who never read *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Books are not in his line. Nay, Bunyan himself, who wrote sixty works, was no great reader. An Oxford scholar who visited him in his study found no books at all, except some of Bunyan's own and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

Yet, little as the world in general cares for reading, it has read Bunyan more than most. One hundred thousand copies of the *Pilgrim* are believed to have been sold in his own day, and the story has been done into the most savage languages, as well as into those of the civilized world.

Dr. Johnson, who did not like Dissenters, praised the "invention, imagination, and conduct of the story," and knew no other book he

wished longer except *Robinson Crusoe* and *Don Quixote*. Well, Dr. Johnson would not have given a farthing for *me*, as I am quite contented with the present length of these masterpieces. What books do *you* wish longer? I wish Homer had written a continuation of the Odyssey, and told us what Odysseus did among the far-off men who never tasted salt nor heard of the sea. A land epic after the sea epic, how good it would have been—from Homer! But it would have taxed the imagination of Dante to continue the adventures of Christian and his wife after they had once crossed the river and reached the city.

John Bunyan has been more fortunate than most authors in one of his biographies.

His life has been written by the Rev. Dr. Brown, who is now minister of his old congregation at Bedford; and an excellent life it is. Dr. Brown is neither Roundhead nor Cavalier; for though he is, of course, on Bunyan's side, he does not throw stones at the beautiful Church of England.

Probably most of us are on Bunyan's side now. It might be a good thing that we should all dwell together in religious unity, but history shows that people cannot be bribed into brotherhood. They tried to bully Bunyan; they arrested and imprisoned him—unfairly even in law, according to Dr. Brown; not unfairly, Mr. Froude thinks—and he would not be bullied.

What was much more extraordinary, he would not be embittered. In spite of all, he still called Charles II "a gracious prince." When a subject is in conscience at variance with the law, Bunyan said, he has but one course—to accept peaceably the punishment which the law awards. He was never soured, never angered by twelve years of durance, not exactly in a loathsome dungeon, but in very uncomfortable quarters. When there came a brief interval of toleration, he did not occupy himself in brawling, but in preaching, and looking after the manners and morals of the little "church," including one woman who brought disagreeable charges against "Brother Honeylove." The church decided that there was nothing in the charges, but somehow the name of Brother Honeylove does not inspire confidence.

Almost everybody knows the main facts of Bunyan's life. They may not know that he was of Norman descent (as Dr. Brown seems to succeed in proving), nor that the Bunyans came over with the Conqueror, nor that he was a gipsy, as others hold. On Dr. Brown's showing, Bunyan's ancestors lost their lands in process of time and change, and Bunyan's father was a tinker. He preferred to call himself a brazier—his was the rather unexpected trade to which Mr. Dick proposed apprenticing David Copperfield.

Bunyan himself, "the wondrous babe," as Dr. Brown enthusiastically styles him, was christened on November 30, 1628. He was born in a cottage, long fallen, and hard by was a marshy place, "a veritable

slough of despond." Bunyan may have had it in mind when he wrote of the slough where Christian had so much trouble. He was not a travelled man: all his knowledge of people and places he found at his doors. He had some schooling, "according to the rate of other poor men's children," and assuredly it was enough.

The great civil war broke out, and Bunyan was a soldier; he tells us not on which side. Dr. Brown and Mr. Lewis Morris think that he was on that of the Parliament, but his old father, the tinker, stood for the King. Mr. Froude is rather more inclined to hold that he was among the "gay gallants who struck for the Crown." He does not seem to have been much under fire, but he got that knowledge of the appearance of war which he used in his siege of the City of Mansoul. One can hardly think that Bunyan liked war—certainly not from cowardice, but from goodness of heart.

In 1646 the army was disbanded, and Bunyan went back to Elstow village and his tinkering, his bell-ringing, his dancing with the girls, his playing at "cat" on a Sunday after service.

He married very young and poor. He married a pious wife, and read all her library—*The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven,* and *The Practice of Piety*. He became very devout in the spirit of the Church of England, and he gave up his amusements. Then he fell into the Slough of Despond, then he went through the Valley of the Shadow, and battled with Apollyon.

People have wondered *why* he fancied himself such a sinner? He confesses to have been a liar and a blasphemer. If I may guess, I fancy that this was merely the literary genius of Bunyan seeking for expression. His lies, I would go bail, were tremendous romances, wild fictions told for fun, never lies of cowardice or for gain. As to his blasphemies, he had an extraordinary power of language, and that was how he gave it play. "Fancy swearing" was his only literary safety-valve, in those early days, when he played "cat" on Elstow Green.

Then he heard a voice dart from heaven into his soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" So he fell on repentance, and passed those awful years of mental torture, when all nature seemed to tempt him to the Unknown Sin.

What did all this mean? It meant that Bunyan was within an ace of madness.

It happens to a certain proportion of men, religiously brought up, to suffer like Bunyan. They hear voices, they are afraid of that awful unknown iniquity, and of eternal death, as Bunyan and Cowper were afraid.

Was it not De Quincey who was at school with a bully who believed he had been guilty of the unpardonable offence? Bullying is an offence much less pardonable than most men are guilty of. Their best plan

(in Bunyan's misery) is to tell Apollyon that the Devil is an ass, to do their work, and speak the truth.

Bunyan got quit of his terror at last, briefly by believing in the goodness of God. He did not say, like Mr. Carlyle, "Well, if all my fears are true, what then?" His was a Christian, not a stoical deliverance.

The church in which Bunyan found shelter had for minister a converted major in a Royalist regiment. It was a quaint little community, the members living like the early disciples, correcting each other's faults, and keeping a severe eye on each other's lives. Bunyan became a minister in it; but, Puritan as he was, he lets his Pilgrims dance on joyful occasions, and even Mr. Ready-to-Halt waltzes with a young lady of the Pilgrim company.

As a minister and teacher Bunyan began to write books of controversy with Quakers and clergymen. The points debated are no longer important to us; the main thing was that he got a pen into his hand, and found a proper outlet for his genius, a better way than fancy swearing.

If he had not been cast into Bedford Jail for preaching in a cottage, he might never have dreamed his immortal dream, nor become all that he was. The leisures of gaol were long. In that "den" the Muse came to him, the fair kind Muse of the Home Beautiful. He saw all that company of his, so like and so unlike Chaucer's: Faithful, and Hopeful, and Christian, the fellowship of fiends, the truculent Cavaliers of Vanity Fair, and Giant Despair, with his grievous crabtree cudgel; and other people he saw who are with us always—the handsome Madam Bubble, and the young woman whose name was Dull, and Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and Mr. Facing Bothways, and Byends, all the persons of the comedy of human life.

He hears the angelic songs of the city beyond the river; he hears them, but repeat them to us he cannot, "for I'm no poet," as he says himself. He beheld the country of Beulah, and the Delectable Mountains, that earthly Paradise of nature where we might be happy yet, and wander no farther, if the world would let us—fair mountains in whose streams Izaak Walton was then even casting angle.

It is pleasant to fancy how Walton and Bunyan might have met and talked, under a plane-tree by the Ouse, while the May showers were falling. Surely Bunyan would not have likened the good old man to Formalist; and certainly Walton would have enjoyed travelling with Christian, though the book was by none of his dear bishops, but by a Nonconformist. They were made to like but not to convert each other; in matters ecclesiastical they saw the opposite sides of the shield. Each wrote a masterpiece. It is too late to praise *The Complete Angler* or *The Pilgrim's Progress*. You may put ingenuity on the rack, but she can say nothing new that is true about the best romance that

ever was wedded to allegory, nor about the best idyl of old English life.

The people are living now—all the people: the noisy, bullying judges, as of the French Revolutionary Courts, or the Hanging Courts after Monmouth's war; the demure, grave Puritan girls; and Matthew, who had the gripes; and lazy, feckless Ignorance, who came to so ill an end, poor fellow; and sturdy Old Honest, and timid Mr. Fearing; not single persons, but dozens, arise on the memory.

They come, as fresh, as vivid, as if they were out of Scott or Molière; the Tinker is as great a master of character and fiction as the greatest, almost; his style is pure, and plain, and sound, full of old idioms, and even of something like old slang. But even his slang is classical.

Bunyan is everybody's author. The very Catholics have their own edition of the *Pilgrim:* they have cut out Giant Pope, but have been too good-natured to insert Giant Protestant in his place. Unheralded, unannounced, though not uncriticized, (they accused the Tinker of being a plagiarist, of course), Bunyan outshone the Court wits, the learned, the poets of the Restoration, and even the great theologians.

His other books, except *Grace Abounding* (an autobiography), *The Holy War,* and *Mr. Badman,* are only known to students, nor much read by them. The fashion of his theology, as of all theology, passed away; it is by virtue of his imagination, of his romance, that he lives.

The allegory, of course, is full of flaws. It would not have been manly of Christian to run off and save his own soul, leaving his wife and family. But Bunyan shrank from showing us how difficult, if not impossible, it is for a married man to be a saint. Christiana was really with him all through the pilgrimage; and how he must have been hampered by that woman of the world! But had the allegory clung more closely to the skirts of truth, it would have changed from a romance to a satire, from *The Pilgrim's Progress* to *Vanity Fair.* There was too much love in Bunyan for a satirist of that kind; he had just enough for a humorist.

Born in another class, he might have been, he would have been, a writer more refined in his strength, more uniformly excellent, but never so universal nor so popular in the best sense of the term.

In the change of times and belief it is not impossible that Bunyan will live among the class whom he least thought of addressing—scholars, lovers of worldly literature—for devotion and poverty are parting company, while art endures till civilization perishes.

Are we better or worse for no longer believing as Bunyan believed, no longer seeing that Abyss of Pascal's open beside our armchairs? The question is only a form of that wide riddle, Does any theological or philosophical opinion make us better or worse? The vast majority of men and women are little affected by schemes and theories of this life and the next. They who even ask for a reply to the riddle are the few: most of us take the easygoing morality of our world for a guide,

as we take Bradshaw for a railway journey. It is the few who must find out an answer: on that answer their lives depend, and the lives of others are insensibly raised towards their level. Bunyan would not have been a worse man if he had shared the faith of Izaak Walton. Izaak had his reply to all questions in the Church Catechism and the Articles. Bunyan found his in the theology of his sect, appealing more strongly than orthodoxy to a nature more bellicose than Izaak's. Men like him, with his indomitable courage, will never lack a solution of the puzzle of the earth. At worst they will live by law, whether they dare to speak of it as God's law, or dare not. They will always be our leaders, our Captain Greathearts, in the pilgrimage to the city where, led or unled, we must all at last arrive. They will not fail us while loyalty and valour are human qualities. The day may conceivably come when we have no Christian to march before us, but we shall never lack the company of Greatheart.

* * *

R. L. STEVENSON

"I HAVE thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, and to Obermann." So Stevenson confessed, and it will be noted that the great essayists are sufficiently prominent in the roll of mentors. He was certainly an apt pupil and, just as certainly, was able to add something of his own which made all that he wrote unmistakably individual. His observation was keen and his artistic feeling never at fault. The rhythmic effects of his prose are wonderfully varied, and he is equal master of the long and the short sentence. His diction is as good as it is often unexpected. No matter how homely or familiar the truth he utters, he will contrive to give its expression an unusual turn. His chief collections of essays are *Virginibus Puerisque* (from which the following example is taken), *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, and *Memories and Portraits*. Among his romances and novels are *Treasure Island*, *Prince Otto*, *Kidnapped*, *Catriona*, and *The Wrecker*. He also wrote short stories and verse. He was born at Edinburgh in 1850 and died in Samoa in 1894.

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CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

"You know my mother now and then argues very notably; always very warmly at least. I happen often to differ from her; and we both think so well of our own arguments, that we very seldom are so happy

as to convince one another. A pretty common case, I believe, in all *vehement* debatings. She says, I am *too witty*; Anglicè, *too pert*; I, that she is *too wise*; that is to say, being likewise put into English, *not so young as she has been*." —Miss Howe to Miss Harlowe, *Clarissa*, vol. ii. Letter xiii.

THERE is a strong feeling in favour of cowardly and prudential proverbs. The sentiments of a man while he is full of ardour and hope are to be received, it is supposed, with some qualification. But when the same person has ignominiously failed and begins to eat up his words, he should be listened to like an oracle. Most of our pocket wisdom is conceived for the use of mediocre people, to discourage them from ambitious attempts, and generally console them in their mediocrity. And since mediocre people constitute the bulk of humanity, this is no doubt very properly so. But it does not follow that the one sort of proposition is any less true than the other, or that Icarus is not to be more praised, and perhaps more envied, than Mr. Samuel Budgett the Successful Merchant. The one is dead, to be sure, while the other is still in his counting-house counting out his money; and doubtless this is a consideration. But we have, on the other hand, some bold and magnanimous sayings common to high races and natures, which set forth the advantage of the losing side, and proclaim it better to be a dead lion than a living dog. It is difficult to fancy how the mediocrities reconcile such sayings with their proverbs. According to the latter, every lad who goes to sea is an egregious ass; never to forget your umbrella through a long life would seem a higher and wiser flight of achievement than to go smiling to the stake; and so long as you are a bit of a coward and inflexible in money matters, you fulfil the whole duty of man.

It is a still more difficult consideration for our average men, that while all their teachers, from Solomon down to Benjamin Franklin and the ungodly Binney, have inculcated the same ideal of manners, caution, and respectability, those characters in history who have most notoriously flown in the face of such precepts are spoken of in hyperbolical terms of praise, and honoured with public monuments in the streets of our commercial centres. This is very bewildering to the moral sense. You have Joan of Arc, who left a humble but honest and reputable livelihood under the eyes of her parents, to go a-colonelling, in the company of rowdy soldiers, against the enemies of France; surely a melancholy example for one's daughters! And then you have Columbus, who may have pioneered America, but, when all is said, was a most imprudent navigator. His Life is not the kind of thing one would like to put into the hands of young people; rather, one would do one's utmost to keep it from their knowledge as a red flag of adven-

ture and disintegrating influence in life. The time would fail me if I were to recite all the big names in history whose exploits are perfectly irrational and even shocking to the business mind. The incongruity is speaking; and I imagine it must engender among the mediocrities a very peculiar attitude towards the nobler and showier sides of national life. They will read of the Charge of Balaclava in much the same spirit as they assist at a performance of the *Lyons Mail*. Persons of substance take in the *Times* and sit composedly in pit or boxes according to the degree of their prosperity in business. As for the generals who go galloping up and down among bomb-shells in absurd cocked hats—as for the actors who raddle their faces and demean themselves for hire upon the stage—they must belong, thank God! to a different order of beings, whom we watch as we watch the clouds careering in the windy, bottomless inane, or read about like characters in ancient and rather fabulous annals. Our offspring would no more think of copying their behaviour, let us hope, than of doffing their clothes and painting themselves blue in consequence of certain admissions in the first chapter of their school history of England.

Discredited as they are in practice, the cowardly proverbs hold their own in theory; and it is another instance of the same spirit, that the opinions of old men about life have been accepted as final. All sorts of allowances are made for the illusions of youth; and none, or almost none, for the disenchantments of age. It is held to be a good taunt, and somehow or other to clinch the question logically, when an old gentleman waggles his head and says: "Ah, so I thought when I was your age." It is not thought an answer at all, if the young man retorts: "My venerable sir, so I shall most probably think when I am yours." And yet the one is as good as the other: pass for pass, tit for tat, a Roland for an Oliver.

"Opinion in good men," says Milton, "is but knowledge in the making." All opinions, properly so called, are stages on the road to truth. It does not follow that a man will travel any further; but if he has really considered the world and drawn a conclusion, he has travelled as far. This does not apply to formulae got by rote, which are stages on the road to nowhere but second childhood and the grave. To have a catchword in your mouth is not the same thing as to hold an opinion; still less is it the same thing as to have made one for yourself. There are too many of these catchwords in the world for people to rap out upon you like an oath and by way of an argument. They have a currency as intellectual counters; and many respectable persons pay their way with nothing else. They seem to stand for vague bodies of theory in the background. The imputed virtue of folios full of knock-down arguments is supposed to reside in them, just as some of the majesty of the British Empire dwells in the constable's truncheon.

They are used in pure superstition as old clodhoppers spoil Latin by way of an exorcism. And yet they are vastly serviceable for checking unprofitable discussion and stopping the mouths of babes and sucklings. And when a young man comes to a certain stage of intellectual growth, the examination of these counters forms a gymnastic at once amusing and fortifying to the mind.

Because I have reached Paris, I am not ashamed of having passed through Newhaven and Dieppe. They were very good places to pass through and I am none the less at my destination. All my old opinions were only stages on the way to something else. I am no more abashed at having been a red-hot Socialist with a panacea of my own than at having been a sucking infant. Doubtless the world is quite right in a million ways; but you have to be kicked about a little to convince you of the fact. And in the meanwhile you must do something, be something, believe something. It is not possible to keep the mind in a state of accurate balance and blank; and even if you could do so, instead of coming ultimately to the right conclusion, you would be very apt to remain in a state of balance and blank to perpetuity. Even in quite intermediate stages, a dash of enthusiasm is not a thing to be ashamed of in the retrospect; if St. Paul had not been a very zealous Pharisee, he would have been a colder Christian. For my part, I look back to the time when I was a Socialist with something like regret. I have convinced myself (for the moment) that we had better leave these great changes to what we call great blind forces: their blindness being so much more perspicacious than the little, peering, partial eyesight of men. I seem to see that my own scheme would not answer; and all the other schemes I ever heard propounded would depress some elements of goodness just as much as they encouraged others. Now I know that in thus turning Conservative with years, I am going through the normal cycle of change and travelling in the common orbit of men's opinions. I submit to this, as I would submit to gout or grey hair, as a concomitant of growing age or else of failing animal heat; but I do not acknowledge that it is necessarily a change for the better—I dare-say it is deplorably for the worse. I have no choice in the business, and can no more resist this tendency of my mind than I could prevent my body from beginning to totter and decay. If I am spared (as the phrase runs) I shall doubtless outlive some troublesome desires; but I am in no hurry about that; nor, when the time comes, shall I plume myself on the immunity. Just in the same way, I do not greatly pride myself on having outlived my belief in the fairy tales of Socialism. Old people have faults of their own; they tend to become cowardly, niggardly, and suspicious. Whether from the growth of experience or the decline of animal heat, I see that age leads to these and certain other faults; and it follows, of course, that while in one sense I hope I am

journeying towards the truth, in another I am indubitably posting towards these forms and sources of error.

As we go catching and catching at this or that corner of knowledge, now getting a foresight of generous possibilities, now chilled with a glimpse of prudence, we may compare the headlong course of our years to a swift torrent in which a man is carried away; now he is dashed against a boulder, now he grapples for a moment to a trailing spray; at the end, he is hurled out and overwhelmed in a dark and bottomless ocean. We have no more than glimpses and touches; we are torn away from our theories; we are spun round and round and shown this or the other view of life, until only fools or knaves can hold to their opinions. We take a sight at a condition in life, and say we have studied it; our most elaborate view is no more than an impression. If we had breathing space, we should take the occasion to modify and adjust; but at this breakneck hurry, we are no sooner boys than we are adult, no sooner in love than married or jilted, no sooner one age than we begin to be another, and no sooner in the fulness of our manhood than we begin to decline towards the grave. It is in vain to seek for consistency or expect clear and stable views in a medium so perturbed and fleeting. This is no cabinet science, in which things are tested to a scruple; we theorize with a pistol to our head; we are confronted with a new set of conditions on which we have not only to pass a judgment, but to take action, before the hour is at an end. And we cannot even regard ourselves as a constant; in this flux of things, our identity itself seems in a perpetual variation; and not infrequently we find our own disguise the strangest in the masquerade. In the course of time, we grow to love things we hated and hate things we loved. Milton is not so dull as he once was, nor perhaps Ainsworth so amusing. It is decidedly harder to climb trees, and not nearly so hard to sit still. There is no use pretending; even the thrice royal game of hide and seek has somehow lost in zest. All our attributes are modified or changed; and it will be a poor account of us if our views do not modify and change in a proportion. To hold the same views at forty as we held at twenty is to have been stupefied for a score of years, and take rank, not as a prophet, but as an unteachable brat, well birched and none the wiser. It is as if a ship captain should sail to India from the Port of London; and having brought a chart of the Thames on deck at his first setting out, should obstinately use no other for the whole voyage.

And mark you, it would be no less foolish to begin at Gravesend with a chart of the Red Sea. *Si Jeunesse savait, si Vieillesse pouvait*, is a very pretty sentiment, but not necessarily right. In five cases out of ten, it is not so much that the young people do not know, as that they do not choose. There is something irreverent in the speculation,

but perhaps the want of power has more to do with the wise resolutions of age than we are always willing to admit. It would be an instructive experiment to make an old man young again and leave him all his *savoir*. I scarcely think he would put his money in the Savings Bank after all; I doubt if he would be such an admirable son as we are led to expect; and as for his conduct in love, I believe firmly he would out-Herod Herod, and put the whole of his new compeers to the blush. Prudence is a wooden Juggernaut, before whom Benjamin Franklin walks with the portly air of a high-priest, and after whom dances many a successful merchant in the character of Atys. But it is not a deity to cultivate in youth. If a man lives to any considerable age, it cannot be denied that he laments his imprudence, but I notice he often laments his youth a deal more bitterly and with a more genuine intonation.

It is customary to say that age should be considered, because it comes last. It seems just as much to the point, that youth comes first. And the scale fairly kicks the beam, if you go on to add that age, in a majority of cases, never comes at all. Disease and accident make short work of even the most prosperous persons; death costs nothing, and the expense of a headstone is an inconsiderable trifle to the happy heir. To be suddenly snuffed out in the middle of ambitious schemes is tragical enough at best; but when a man has been grudging himself his own life in the meanwhile, and saving up everything for the festival that was never to be, it becomes that hysterically moving sort of tragedy which lies on the confines of farce. The victim is dead—and he has cunningly overreached himself: a combination of calamities none the less absurd for being grim. To husband a favourite claret until the batch turns sour, is not at all an artful stroke of policy; and how much more with a whole cellar—a whole bodily existence! People may lay down their lives with cheerfulness in the sure expectation of a blessed immortality; but that is a different affair from giving up youth with all its admirable pleasures, in the hope of a better quality of gruel in a more than problematical, nay, more than improbable, old age. We should not compliment a hungry man, who should refuse a whole dinner and reserve all his appetite for the dessert, before he knew whether there was to be any dessert or not. If there be such a thing as imprudence in the world, we surely have it here. We sail in leaky bottoms and on great and perilous waters; and to take a cue from the dolorous old naval ballad, we have heard the mermaidens singing, and know that we shall never see dry land any more. Old and young, we are all on our last cruise. If there is a fill of tobacco among the crew, for God's sake pass it round, and let us have a pipe before we go!

Indeed, by the report of our elders, this nervous preparation for old age is only trouble thrown away. We fall on guard, and after all it is

a friend who comes to meet us. After the sun is down and the west faded, the heavens begin to fill with shining stars. So, as we grow old, a sort of equable jog-trot of feeling is substituted for the violent ups and downs of passion and disgust; the same influence that restrains our hopes, quiets our apprehensions; if the pleasures are less intense, the troubles are milder and more tolerable; and in a word, this period for which we are asked to hoard up everything as for a time of famine, is, in its own right, the richest, easiest, and happiest of life. Nay, by managing its own work and following its own happy inspiration, youth is doing the best it can to endow the leisure of age. A full, busy youth is your only prelude to a self-contained and independent age; and the muff inevitably develops into the bore. There are not many Doctor Johnsons, to set forth upon their first romantic voyage at sixty-four. If we wish to scale Mont Blanc or visit a thieves' kitchen in the East End, to go down in a diving-dress or up in a balloon, we must be about it while we are still young. It will not do to delay until we are clogged with prudence and limping with rheumatism, and people begin to ask us: "What does Gravity out of bed?" Youth is the time to go flashing from one end of the world to the other both in mind and body; to try the manners of different nations; to hear the chimes at midnight; to see sunrise in town and country; to be converted at a revival; to circumnavigate the metaphysics, write halting verses, run a mile to see a fire, and wait all day long in the theatre to applaud *Hernani*. There is some meaning in the old theory about wild oats; and a man who has not had his green-sickness and got done with it for good, is as little to be depended on as an unvaccinated infant. "It is extraordinary," said Lord Beaconsfield, one of the brightest and best preserved of youths up to the date of his last novel, "it is extraordinary how hourly and how violently change the feelings of an unexperienced young man." And this mobility is a special talent entrusted to his care; a sort of indestructible virginity; a magic armour, with which he can pass unhurt through great dangers and come unbedaubed out of the miriest passages. Let him voyage, speculate, see all that he can, do all that he may; his soul has as many lives as a cat; he will live in all weathers, and never be a halfpenny the worse. Those who go to the devil in youth, with anything like a fair chance, were probably little worth saving from the first; they must have been feeble fellows—creatures made of putty and pack-thread, without steel or fire, anger or true joyfulness, in their composition; we may sympathize with their parents, but there is not much cause to go into mourning for themselves; for to be quite honest, the weak brother is the worst of mankind.

When the old man waggles his head and says, "Ah, so I thought when I was your age," he has proved the youth's case. Doubtless, whether from growth of experience or decline of animal heat, he thinks so no

longer; but he thought so while he was young; and all men have thought so while they were young, since there was dew in the morning or hawthorn in May; and here is another young man adding his vote to those of previous generations and rivetting another link to the chain of testimony. It is as natural and as right for a young man to be imprudent and exaggerated, to live in swoops and circles, and beat about his cage like any other wild thing newly captured, as it is for old men to turn grey, or mothers to love their offspring, or heroes to die for something worthier than their lives.

By way of an apologue for the aged, when they feel more than usually tempted to offer their advice, let me recommend the following little tale. A child who had been remarkably fond of toys (and in particular of lead soldiers) found himself growing to the level of acknowledged boyhood without any abatement of this childish taste. He was thirteen; already he had been taunted for dallying overlong about the playbox; he had to blush if he was found among his lead soldiers; the shades of the prison-house were closing about him with a vengeance. There is nothing more difficult than to put the thoughts of children into the language of their elders; but this is the effect of his meditations at this juncture: "Plainly," he said, "I must give up my playthings in the meanwhile, since I am not in a position to secure myself against idle jeers. At the same time, I am sure that playthings are the very pick of life; all people give them up out of the same pusillanimous respect for those who are a little older; and if they do not return to them as soon as they can, it is only because they grow stupid and forget. I shall be wiser; I shall conform for a little to the ways of their foolish world; but so soon as I have made enough money, I shall retire and shut myself up among my playthings until the day I die." Nay, as he was passing in the train along the Esterel mountains between Cannes and Fréjus, he remarked a pretty house in an orange garden at the angle of a bay, and decided that this should be his Happy Valley. Astrea Redux; childhood was to come again! The idea has an air of simple nobility to me, not unworthy of Cincinnatus. And yet, as the reader has probably anticipated, it is never likely to be carried into effect. There was a worm i' the bud, a fatal error in the premises. Childhood must pass away, and then youth, as surely as age approaches. The true wisdom is to be always seasonable, and to change with a good grace in changing circumstances. To love playthings well as a child, to lead an adventurous and honourable youth, and to settle, when the time arrives, into a green and smiling age, is to be a good artist in life and deserve well of yourself and your neighbour.

You need repent none of your youthful vagaries. They may have been over the score on one side, just as those of age are probably over the score on the other. But they had a point; they not only befitted

your age and expressed its attitude and passions, but they had a relation to what was outside of you, and implied criticisms on the existing state of things, which you need not allow to have been undeserved, because you now see that they were partial. All error, not merely verbal, is a strong way of stating that the current truth is incomplete. The follies of youth have a basis in sound reason, just as much as the embarrassing questions put by babes and sucklings. Their most anti-social acts indicate the defects of our society. When the torrent sweeps the man against a boulder, you must expect him to scream, and you need not be surprised if the scream is sometimes a theory. Shelley, chafing at the Church of England, discovered the cure of all evils in universal atheism. Generous lads irritated at the injustices of society, see nothing for it but the abolishment of everything and Kingdom Come of anarchy. Shelley was a young fool; so are these cock-sparrow revolutionaries. But it is better to be a fool than to be dead. It is better to emit a scream in the shape of a theory than to be entirely insensible to the jars and incongruities of life and take everything as it comes in a forlorn stupidity. Some people swallow the universe like a pill; they travel on through the world, like smiling images pushed from behind. For God's sake give me the young man who has brains enough to make a fool of himself! As for the others, the irony of facts shall take it out of their hands, and make fools of them in downright earnest, ere the farce be over. There shall be such a mopping and a mowing at the last day, and such blushing and confusion of countenance for all those who have been wise in their own esteem, and have not learnt the rough lessons that youth hands on to age. If we are indeed here to perfect and complete our own natures, and grow larger, stronger, and more sympathetic against some nobler career in the future, we had all best bestir ourselves to the utmost while we have the time. To equip a dull, respectable person with wings would be but to make a parody of an angel.

In short, if youth is not quite right in its opinions, there is a strong probability that age is not much more so. Undying hope is co-ruler of the human bosom with infallible credulity. A man finds he has been wrong at every preceding stage of his career, only to deduce the astonishing conclusion that he is at last entirely right. Mankind, after centuries of failure, are still upon the eve of a thoroughly constitutional millennium. Since we have explored the maze so long without result, it follows, for poor human reason, that we cannot have to explore much longer; close by must be the centre, with a champagne luncheon and a piece of ornamental water. How if there were no centre at all, but just one alley after another, and the whole world a labyrinth without end or issue?

I overheard the other day a scrap of conversation, which I take the

liberty to reproduce. "What I advance is true," said one. "But not the whole truth," answered the other. "Sir," returned the first (and it seemed to me there was a smack of Dr. Johnson in the speech), "Sir, there is no such thing as the whole truth!" Indeed, there is nothing so evident in life as that there are two sides to a question. History is one long illustration. The forces of nature are engaged, day by day, in cudgelling it into our backward intelligences. We never pause for a moment's consideration, but we admit it as an axiom. An enthusiast sways humanity exactly by disregarding this great truth, and dinning it into our ears that this or that question has only one possible solution; and your enthusiast is a fine florid fellow, dominates things for a while and shakes the world out of a doze; but when once he is gone, an army of quiet and uninfluential people set to work to remind us of the other side and demolish the generous imposture. While Calvin is putting everything exactly right in his *Institutes,* and hot-headed Knox is thundering in the pulpit, Montaigne is already looking at the other side in his library in Périgord, and predicting that they will find as much to quarrel about in the Bible as they had found already in the Church. Age may have one side, but assuredly Youth has the other. There is nothing more certain than that both are right, except perhaps that both are wrong. Let them agree to differ; for who knows but what agreeing to differ may not be a form of agreement rather than a form of difference?

I suppose it is written that anyone who sets up for a bit of a philosopher, must contradict himself to his very face. For here have I fairly talked myself into thinking that we have the whole thing before us at last; that there is no answer to the mystery, except that there are as many as you please; that there is no centre to the maze because, like the famous sphere, its centre is everywhere; and that agreeing to differ with every ceremony of politeness, is the only "one undisturbed song of pure concent" to which we are ever likely to lend our musical voices.

* * *

ALICE MEYNELL

Alice Meynell was born in 1850. She and her sister Elizabeth were educated by their father with particular care. Elizabeth became Lady Butler and famous as a painter of battle scenes. Alice, who married Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, commanded the attention of all good critics because of the excellence of both her poems and her essays. In quantity her work does not bulk large, but of its quality she was ever jealous. The following essay, reprinted from *Selected Essays,* will indicate the combined strength and delicacy of her writing. She is economical in the use of her material and never weakens a

statement by over-emphasis or by employing a word too many. George Meredith called her essays "little sermons, ideal sermons," adding the illuminating qualifications, "They are not preachments. They leave a sense of stilled singing in the mind they fill. The writing is limpid in its depths." Mrs. Meynell died in 1922.

This essay is reprinted by permission of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell.

THE COLOUR OF LIFE

RED has been praised for its nobility as the colour of life. But the true colour of life is not red. Red is the colour of violence, or of life broken open, edited, and published. Or if red is indeed the colour of life, it is so only on condition that it is not seen. Once fully visible, red is the colour of life violated, and in the act of betrayal and of waste. Red is the secret of life, and not the manifestation thereof. It is one of the things the value of which is secrecy, one of the talents that are to be hidden in a napkin. The true colour of life is the colour of the body, the colour of the covered red, the implicit and not explicit red of the living heart and the pulses. It is the modest colour of the unpublished blood. So bright, so light, so soft, so mingled, the gentle colour of life is outdone by all the colours of the world. Its very beauty is that it is white, but less white than milk; brown, but less brown than earth; red, but less red than sunset or dawn. It is lucid, but less lucid than the colour of lilies. It has the hint of gold that is in all fine colour; but in our latitudes the hint is almost elusive. Under Sicilian skies, indeed, it is deeper than old ivory; but under the misty blue of the English zenith, and the warm grey of the London horizon, it is as delicately flushed as the paler wild roses out to their utmost, flat as stars, in the hedges of the end of June.

For months together London does not see the colour of life in any mass. The human face does not give much of it, what with features, and beards, and the shadow of the top-hat and *chapeau melon* of man, and of the veils of woman. Besides, the colour of the face is subject to a thousand injuries and accidents. The popular face of the Londoner has soon lost its gold, its white, and the delicacy of its red and brown. We miss little beauty by the fact that it is never seen freely in great numbers out-of-doors. You get it in some quantity when all the heads of a great indoor meeting are turned at once upon a speaker; but it is only in the open air, needless to say, that the colour of life is in perfection, in the open air, "clothed with the sun," whether the sunshine be golden and direct, or dazzlingly diffused in grey.

The little figure of the London boy it is that has restored to the landscape the human colour of life. He is allowed to come out of all his ignominies, and to take the late colour of the midsummer north-

west evening, on the borders of the Serpentine. At the stroke of eight he sheds the slough of nameless colours—all allied to the hues of dust, soot, and fog, which are the colours the world has chosen for its boys—and he makes, in his hundreds, a bright and delicate flush between the grey-blue water and the grey-blue sky. Clothed now with the sun, he is crowned by-and-by with twelve stars as he goes to bathe, and the reflection of an early moon is under his feet.

So little stands between a gamin and all the dignities of Nature. They are so quickly restored. There seems to be nothing to do, but only a little thing to undo. It is like the art of Eleonora Duse. The last and most finished action of her intellect, passion, and knowledge is, as it were, the flicking away of some insignificant thing mistaken for art by other actors, some little obstacle to the way and liberty of Nature.

All the squalor is gone in a moment, kicked off with the second boot, and the child goes shouting to complete the landscape with the lacking colour of life. You are inclined to wonder that, even undressed, he still shouts with a Cockney accent. You half expect pure vowels and elastic syllables from his restoration, his spring, his slenderness, his brightness, and his glow. Old ivory and wild rose in the deepening midsummer sun, he gives his colours to his world again.

It is easy to replace man, and it will take no great time, where Nature has lapsed, to replace Nature. It is always to do, by the happily easy way of doing nothing. The grass is always ready to grow in the streets—and no streets could ask for a more charming finish than your green grass. The gasometer even must fall to pieces unless it is renewed; but the grass renews itself. There is nothing so remediable as the work of modern man—"a thought which is also," as Mr. Pecksniff said, "very soothing." And by remediable I mean, of course, destructible. As the bathing child shuffles off his garments—they are few, and one brace suffices him—so the land might always, in reasonable time, shuffle off its yellow brick and purple slate, and all the things that collect about railway stations. A single night almost clears the air of London.

But if the colour of life looks so well in the rather sham scenery of Hyde Park, it looks brilliant and grave indeed on a real sea-coast. To have once seen it there should be enough to make a colourist. O memorable little picture! The sun was gaining colour as it neared setting, and it set not over the sea, but over the land. The sea had the dark and rather stern, but not cold, blue of that aspect—the dark and not the opal tints. The sky was also deep. Everything was very definite, without mystery, and exceedingly simple. The most luminous thing was the shining white of an edge of foam, which did not cease to be white because it was a little golden and a little rosy in the sunshine. It was still the whitest thing imaginable. And the next most luminous

thing was the little child, also invested with the sun and the colour of life.

In the case of women, it is of the living and unpublished blood that the violent world has professed to be delicate and ashamed. See the curious history of the political rights of woman under the Revolution. On the scaffold she enjoyed an ungrudged share in the fortunes of party. Political life might be denied her, but that seems a trifle when you consider how generously she was permitted political death. She was to spin and cook for her citizen in the obscurity of her living hours; but to the hour of her death was granted a part in the largest interests, social, national, international. The blood wherewith she should, according to Robespierre, have blushed to be seen or heard in the tribune, was exposed in the public sight unsheltered by her veins.

Against this there was no modesty. Of all privacies, the last and the innermost—the privacy of death—was never allowed to put obstacles in the way of public action for a public cause. Women might be, and were, duly suppressed when, by the mouth of Olympe de Gouges, they claimed a "right to concur in the choice of representatives for the formation of the laws"; but in her person, too, they were liberally allowed to bear political responsibility to the Republic. Olympe de Gouges was guillotined. Robespierre thus made her public and complete amends.

* * *

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL

THROUGH Mr. Birrell a word has been added to our language. The verb "to birrell" expresses that delightful humour and whimsical turn of expression which he has made his own, and if the word vanishes as it came it will be because he has no successor in this particular art. He is a true bookman and is unexcelled in the happy knack of interpreting to others the books which he loves. Born in 1850, he has had a long and varied career in letters, the law, and politics, but there can be no doubt that literature is his first love. As far back as 1884 *Obiter Dicta* was published showing those who had eyes to see that a new essayist had arisen. Since then further volumes have appeared, all too infrequently. *Res Judicatæ*, *Men, Women and Books*, *In the Name of the Bodleian*, and *More Obiter Dicta* amply confirmed the favourable judgment which was passed upon the first book. Mr. Birrell has also made some successful ventures into the realm of biography.

The following essay is reprinted from *Men, Women, and Books* by permission of Mr. Elliot Stock, Publisher, 7 Paternoster Row, London, E. C.; this essay also appears in the Collected Edition of Augustine Birrell's *Essays and Addresses* published by Messrs. J. M. Dent and Son, Ltd., London, W. C.

BOOK-BUYING

A MOST distinguished Englishman, who, great as he was in many directions, was perhaps inherently more a man of letters than anything else, has been overheard mournfully to declare that there were more booksellers' shops in his native town long years ago, when he was a boy in it, than are to-day to be found within its boundaries. And yet the place "all unabashed" now boasts its bookless self a city!

Mr. Gladstone was, of course, referring to second-hand bookshops. Neither he nor any other sensible man puts himself out about new books. When a new book is published, read an old one, was the advice of a sound though surly critic. It is one of the boasts of letters to have glorified the term "second-hand," which other crafts have "soiled to all ignoble use." But why it has been able to do this is obvious. All the best books are necessarily second-hand. The writers of to-day need not grumble. Let them "bide a wee." If their books are worth anything, they, too, one day will be second-hand. If their books are not worth anything, there are ancient trades still in full operation amongst us—the pastrycooks and the trunkmakers—who must have paper.

But is there any substance in the plaint that nobody now buys books, meaning thereby second-hand books? The late Mark Pattison, who had 16,000 volumes, and whose lightest word has therefore weight, once stated that he had been informed, and verily believed, that there were men of his own University of Oxford who, being in uncontrolled possession of annual incomes of not less than £500, thought they were doing the thing handsomely if they expended £50 a year upon their libraries. But we are not bound to believe this unless we like. There was a touch of morosity about the late Rector of Lincoln which led him to take gloomy views of men, particularly Oxford men.

No doubt arguments *à priori* may readily be found to support the contention that the habit of book-buying is on the decline. I confess to know one or two men, not Oxford men either, but Cambridge men (and the passion of Cambridge for literature is a byword), who, on the plea of being pressed with business, or because they were going to a funeral, have passed a bookshop in a strange town without so much as stepping inside "just to see whether the fellow had anything." But painful as facts of this sort necessarily are, any damaging inference we might feel disposed to draw from them is dispelled by a comparison of price-lists. Compare a bookseller's catalogue of 1862 with one of the present year, and your pessimism is washed away by the tears which unrestrainedly flow as you see what *bonnes fortunes* you have lost. A young book-buyer might well turn out upon Primrose Hill and bemoan his youth, after comparing old catalogues with new.

Nothing but American competition, grumble some old stagers.

Well! why not? This new battle for the books is a free fight, not a private one, and Columbia has "joined in." Lower prices are not to be looked for. The book-buyer of 1950 will be glad to buy at to-day's prices. I take pleasure in thinking he will not be able to do so. Good finds grow scarcer and scarcer. True it is that but a few short weeks ago I picked up (such is the happy phrase, most apt to describe what was indeed a "street casualty") a copy of the original edition of *Endymion* (Keats's poem—O subscriber to Mudie's!—not Lord Beaconsfield's novel) for the easy equivalent of half a crown; but then that was one of my lucky days. The enormous increase of booksellers' catalogues and their wide circulation amongst the trade has already produced a hateful uniformity of prices. Go where you will it is all the same to the odd sixpence. Time was when you could map out the country for yourself with some hopefulness of plunder. There were districts where the Elizabethan dramatists were but slenderly protected. A raid into the "bonnie North Countrie" sent you home again cheered with chap-books and weighted with old pamphlets of curious interests; whilst the West of England seldom failed to yield a crop of novels. I remember getting a complete set of the Brontë books in the original issues at Torquay, I may say, for nothing. Those days are over. Your country bookseller is, in fact, more likely, such tales does he hear of London auctions, and such catalogues does he receive by every post, to exaggerate the value of his wares than to part with them pleasantly, and as a country bookseller should, "just to clear my shelves, you know, and give me a bit of room." The only compensation for this is the catalogues themselves. You get *them*, at least, for nothing, and it cannot be denied that they make mighty pretty reading.

These high prices tell their own tale, and force upon us the conviction that there never were so many private libraries in course of growth as there are to-day.

Libraries are not made; they grow. Your first two thousand volumes present no difficulty, and cost astonishingly little money. Given £400 and five years, and an ordinary man can in the ordinary course, without undue haste or putting any pressure upon his taste, surround himself with this number of books, all in his own language, and thenceforward have at least one place in the world in which it is possible to be happy. But pride is still out of the question. To be proud of having two thousand books would be absurd. You might as well be proud of having two top-coats. After your first two thousand difficulty begins, but until you have ten thousand volumes the less you say about your library the better. *Then* you may begin to speak.

It is no doubt a pleasant thing to have a library left you. The present writer will disclaim no such legacy, but hereby undertakes to accept it, however dusty. But good as it is to inherit a library, it is better

to collect one. Each volume then, however lightly a stranger's eye may roam from shelf to shelf, has its own individuality, a history of its own. You remember where you got it, and how much you gave for it; and your word may safely be taken for the first of these facts, but not for the second.

The man who has a library of his own collection is able to contemplate himself objectively, and is justified in believing in his own existence. No other man but he would have made precisely such a combination as his. Had he been in any single respect different from what he is, his library, as it exists, never would have existed. Therefore, surely he may exclaim, as in the gloaming he contemplates the backs of his loved ones, "They are mine, and I am theirs."

But the eternal note of sadness will find its way even through the keyhole of a library. You turn some familiar page, of Shakespeare it may be, and his "infinite variety," his "multitudinous mind," suggests some new thought, and as you are wondering over it you think of Lycidas, your friend, and promise yourself the pleasure of having his opinion of your discovery the very next time when by the fire you two "help waste a sullen day." Or it is, perhaps, some quainter, tenderer fancy that engages your solitary attention, something in Sir Philip Sidney or Henry Vaughan, and then you turn to look for Phyllis, ever the best interpreter of love, human or divine. Alas! the printed page grows hazy beneath a filmy eye as you suddenly remember that Lycidas is dead—"dead ere his prime"—and that the pale cheek of Phyllis will never again be relumined by the white light of her pure enthusiasm. And then you fall to thinking of the inevitable, and perhaps, in your present mood, not unwelcome hour, when the "ancient peace" of your old friends will be disturbed, when rude hands will dislodge them from their accustomed nooks and break up their goodly company.

> Death bursts amongst them like a shell,
> And strews them over half the town.

They will form new combinations, lighten other men's toil, and soothe another's sorrow. Fool that I was to call anything *mine!*

* * *

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM

A Scottish laird, educated at Harrow, who preaches the futility of our modern conceptions of success, Mr. Cunninghame Graham is a puzzle to those who forget the human element which will insist on going its own way, breaking through all the bonds of tradition and environment. He knows South America and Northern Africa and shows

us how the backwardness of Spain is to be preferred to our own so-called progress. Horses are a passion with him. He has written travel-sketches, essays, and stories, all showing marked vigour and punctuated with a witty irony that is peculiar to him. He was born in 1852.

The following essay is taken from *Success and Other Sketches* by permission of Messrs. Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd.

SUCCESS

SUCCESS, which touches nothing that it does not vulgarize, should be its own reward. In fact, rewards of any kind are but vulgarities.

We applaud successful folk, and straight forget them, as we do ballet-dancers, actors, and orators. They strut their little hour, and then are relegated to peerages, to baronetcies, to books of landed gentry, and the like.

Quick triumphs make short public memories. Triumph itself only endures the time the triumphal car sways through the street. Your nine days' wonder is a sort of five-legged calf, or a two-headed nightingale, and of the nature of a calculating boy—a seven months' prodigy, born out of time to his own undoing and a mere wonderment for gaping dullards who dislocate their jaws in ecstasy of admiration and then start out to seek new idols to adore. We feel, that after all the successful man is fortune's wanton, and that good luck and he have but been equal to two common men. Poverty, many can endure with dignity. Success, how few can carry off, even with decency and without baring their innermost infirmities before the public gaze!

Caricatures in bronze and marble, and titles made ridiculous by their exotic style we shower upon all those who have succeeded, in war, in literature, or art; we give them money, and for a season no African Lucullus in Park Lane can dine without them. Then having given, feel that we have paid for service rendered, and generally withhold respect.

For those who fail, for those who have sunk still battling beneath the muddy waves of life, we keep our love, and that curiosity about their lives which makes their memories green when the cheap gold is dusted over, which once we gave success.

How few successful men are interesting! Hannibal, Alcibiades, with Raleigh, Mithridates, and Napoleon, who would compare them for a moment with their mere conquerors?

The unlucky Stuarts, from the first poet king slain at the ball play, to the poor mildewed Cardinal of York, with all their faults, they leave the stolid Georges millions of miles behind, sunk in their pudding and prosperity. The prosperous Elizabeth, after a life of honours unwill-

ingly surrendering her cosmetics up to death in a state bed, and Mary laying her head upon the block of Fotheringay after the nine and forty years of failure of her life (failure except of love), how many million miles, unfathomable seas, and sierras upon sierras separate them?

And so of nations, causes, and events. Nations there are as interesting in decadence, as others in their ten-percentish apogee are dull and commonplace. Causes, lost almost from the beginning of the world, but hardly yet despaired of, as the long struggle betwixt rich and poor, which dullards think eternal, but which will one day be resolved, either by the absorption of the rich into the legions of the poor, or vice versa, still remain interesting, and will do so whilst the unequal combat yet endures.

Causes gone out of vogue, which have become almost as ludicrous as is a hat from Paris of ten years ago; causes which hang in monumental mockery quite out of fashion, as that of Poland, still are more interesting than is the struggle between the English and the Germans, which shall sell gin and gunpowder to negroes on the Coast.

Even events long passed, which right-thinking men have years ago dismissed to gather dust in the waste spaces of their minds, may interest or repel according as they may make for failure or success.

Failure alone can interest speculative minds. Success is for the millions of the working world, who see the engine in eight hours arrive in Edinburgh from London, and marvel at the last improvement in its wheels. The real interest in the matters being the forgotten efforts of some alchemist who, with the majesty of law ever awake to burn him as a witch, with the hoarse laughter of the practical and business men still ringing in his ears, made his rude model of a steam engine, and perhaps lost his eyesight when it burst.

On a deserted beach in Cuba, not far from El Caney, some travellers not long ago came on a skeleton. Seated in a rough chair, it sat and gazed upon the sea. The gulls had roosted on the collar bones, and round the feet sea-wrack and dulse had formed a sort of wreath. A tattered Spanish uniform still fluttered from the bones, and a cigar-box set beside the chair held papers showing that the man had been an officer of rank. One of these gave the password of the day when he had lost his life, and as the travellers gazed upon the bones, a land crab peeped out of a hole just underneath the chair.

All up and down the coast were strewn the remnants of the pomp and circumstances of glorious war. Rifles with rusty barrels, the stocks set thick with barnacles, steel scabbards with bent swords wasted to scrap iron, fragments of uniforms and belts, ends of brass chains and bones of horses reft from their wind-swept prairies to undergo the agonies of transport in a ship, packed close as sardines in a box, and then left to die wounded with the vultures picking out their eyes. All, all, was there, fairly spread out as in a kindergarten, to point

the lesson to the fools who write of war, if they had wit to see. Gun carriages half silted up with sand, and rusted broken Maxims, gave an air of ruin, as is the case wherever Titan man has been at play, broken his toys, and then set out to kill his brother fools.

Withal nothing of dignity about the scene; a stage unskilfully set out with properties all got up on the cheap; even the ribs and trucks of the decaying ships of what once had been Admiral Cervera's fleet stood roasting in the sun, their port-holes just awash, as they once roasted in the flames which burned them and their crews. Nothing but desolation in the scene, and yet a desolation of a paltry kind, not caused by time, by famine, pestilence, or anything which could impart an air of tragedy, only the desolation made by those who had respectively sent their poor helots out to fight, staying themselves smug and secure at home, well within reach of the quotations of the Stock Exchange.

So in his mouldering chair the general sat, his password antiquated and become as much the property of the first passer-by as an advertisement of "liver pills." His uniform, no doubt his pride, all rags; his sword (bought at some outfitter's) long stolen away and sold for drink by him who filched it; but yet the sun-dried bones, which once had been a man, were of themselves more interesting than were his living conquerors with their cheap air of insincere success.

The world goes out to greet the conqueror with flowers and with shouts, but first he has to conquer, and so draw down upon himself the acclamations of the crowd, who do not know that hundreds such as the man they stultify with noise have gloriously failed, and that the odium of success is hard enough to bear, without the added ignominy of popular applause. Who with a spark of humour in his soul can bear success without some irritation in his mind? But for good luck he might have been one of the shouters who run sweating by his car; doubts must assail him, if success has not already made him pachydermatous to praise, that sublimate which wears away the angles of our self-respect, and leaves us smooth to catch the mud our fellows fling at us, in their fond adoration of accomplished facts. Success is but the recognition (chiefly by yourself) that you are better than your fellows are. A paltry feeling, nearly allied to the base scheme of punishments and of rewards which has made most faiths arid, and rendered actions noble in themselves mere huckstering affairs of fire insurance.

If a man put his life in peril for the Victoria Cross, or pass laborious days in laboratories tormenting dogs, only to be a baronet at last, a plague of courage and laborious days. Arts, sciences, and literature, with all the other trifles in which hard-working idle men make occupations for themselves, when they lead to material success, spoil their

professor, and degrade themselves to piecework at so many pounds an hour.

Nothing can stand against success and yet keep fresh. Nations as well as individuals feel its vulgarizing power. Throughout all Europe, Spain alone still rears its head, the unspoiled race, content in philosophic guise to fail in all she does, and thus preserve the individual independence of her sons. Successful nations have to be content with their success, their citizens cannot be interesting. So many hundred feet of sanitary tubes a minute or an hour, so many wage-saving applications of machinery, so many men grown rich; fancy a poet rich through rhyming, or a philosopher choked in banknotes, whilst writing his last scheme of wise philosophy. Yet those who fail, no matter how ingloriously, have their revenge on the successful few, by having kept themselves free from vulgarity, or by having died unknown.

A miner choked with firedamp in a pit, dead in the vain attempt to save some beer-mused comrade left behind entombed, cannot be vulgar, even if when alive he was a thief. Your crass successful man who has his statue set up in our streets (apparently to scare away the crows), and when he dies his column and a half in penny cyclopædias, turns interest to ashes by his apotheosis in the vulgar eye.

But the forgotten general sitting in his chair, his fleshless feet just lapping in the waves, his whitening bones fast mouldering into dust, nothing can vulgarize him; no fool will crown him with a tin-foiled laurel wreath, no poetaster sing his praise in maudlin or halting threnody, for he has passed into the realm of those who by misfortune claim the sympathy of writers who are dumb.

Let him sit on and rest, looking out on the sea, where his last vision saw the loss of his doomed country's fleet.

An archetype of those who fail, let him still sit watching the gulls fly screaming through the air, and mark the fish spring and fall back again with a loud crash, in the still waters of the tropic beach.

* * *

VERNON LEE

Miss Violet Paget, who writes under the name of "Vernon Lee," was born in 1856, and has spent much of her time in Italy. She has written books on the Renaissance, on æsthetics, and on travel, together with some novels, and many volumes of essays. In one of her essays she admits that life on the whole has been uncommonly kind to her. She is optimistic, however, not on that account merely, but because it is, with her, a fundamental principle that "one is nearer the truth when cheerful than when depressed." That statement will give the reader a fair idea of Vernon Lee's point of view, but he must go to the essays

themselves to appreciate the choiceness and delicate flavour of her prose.

The following essay is reprinted from *Hortus Vitae* by permission of Messrs. John Lane the Bodley Head, Ltd.

RECEIVING LETTERS

I THINK I shall not treat of writing them. That is a different matter, with pains and pleasures of its own, which do not correspond (the word fits nicely to this subject) with those of letters received. For 'tis a metaphysical mistake, or myth of Language, like those victoriously exposed by the ingenious *M. Tarde,* to regard the reading of a letter as the symmetrical opposite (the right glove matching the left, or *inside of an outside*) of the writing thereof. Save in the case of lovers or moonstruck persons, like those in Emerson's essay on "Friendship," the reading of a letter is necessarily less potent, and, as the French say, *intimate,* in emotion, than the writing of it. Indeed, we catch ourselves repeatedly thrusting into our pocket for perusal at greater leisure those very letters which poured out like burning lava from their writers, or were conned over lovingly, lingeringly altered and rewritten; and we wonder sometimes at our lack of sympathy and wonder also (with cynicism or blushes) whether our letters also, say that one of Tuesday—But no; *our* letters are not egoistical. . . .

The thought is not one to be dwelt on in an essay, which is nothing if it is not pleasing. So I proceed to note also that pleasure at the contents has nothing to do with the little excitement of the arrival of the post-bag, or of watching the clerk's slow evolutions at a *poste restante* window. That satisfaction is due to the mere moment's hope for novelty, the flash past of the outer world, and the comfortable sense of having a following, friends, relatives, clients; and it is in proportion to the dulness of our surroundings. Great statesmen or fortunate lovers, methinks, must turn away from aunts' and cousins' epistles, and from the impression of so and so up the Nile, or on first seeing Rome. Indeed, I venture to suggest that only the monotony of our forbears' lives explains the existence of those endless volumes of dreary allusions and pointless anecdote handed down to us as the Correspondence of Sir Somebody This, or of the beautiful Countess of That, or even of Blank, that prince of coffee-house wits. The welcome they received in days when (as is recorded by Scott) the mail occasionally arrived at Edinburgh carrying only one single letter, has given such letters a reputation for delightfulness utterly disconnected with any intrinsic merit, but which we sycophantishly accept after a hundred or two hundred years, handing it on with hypocritical phrases

about "quaintness," and "vivid picture of the past," and similar nonsense. But the Wizard Past casts wonderful spells. And then there is the tenderness and piety due to those poor dead people, once strutting majestically in power, beauty, wit, or genius; and now left shivering, poor, thin, transparent ghosts in those faded, thrice-crossed paper rags! I feel rebuked for my inhuman irreverence. Out upon it! I will speak only pious words about the letters of dead folk.

But, to make up for such good feeling, let me say what I think about the letters of persons now living, in good health, my contemporaries and very liable to outlive me. For if I am to praise the letters which my soul loves, I must be plain also about those which my soul abhors.

And to begin with the worst. The letter we all hate most, I feel quite sure, is the nice letter of a person whom we think horrid. Some beings have the disquieting peculiarity, which crowns their other bad qualities, of being able to write more pleasingly than they speak, look, or (we suppose) act; revealing, pen in hand, human characteristics, sometimes alas! human charms, high principle, pathetic sentiment, poetic insight, sensitiveness to nature, things we are bound to love, but particularly do not wish to love in *them*. This villainous faculty, which puts us in a rage and forces us to be amiable, is almost enough to make us like, or at all events condone, its contrary in our own dear friends. I mean that marvellous transformation to which so many of those we love are subject; creatures, supple, subtle, and sympathetic in the flesh, in speech and glance and deed, becoming stiff, utterly impervious and heartless once they set to writing; lovely Melusinas turning, not into snakes, but into some creature like a dried cod. This is much worse with persons of our nation than with our foreign friends, owing to that fine contempt for composition, grammar, and punctuation which marks the well-bred Briton, and especially the well-bred Briton's wife and daughter. As a result, there is a positive satisfaction, a sense of voluminous well-being, derived from a letter which is merely explicit, consecutive, and garnished with occasional stops. This question of punctuation is a serious one. Speaking personally, I find I cannot enjoy the ineffable sense of resting in the affection and wisdom of my friend, if I am jerked breathless from noun to noun and from verb to verb, or set hunting desperately after predicates. Worse even is the lack of explicitness. The peace and trustfulness, the respite given by friendship from what Whitman calls "the terrible doubt of appearances" are incompatible with brief and casual utterance, ragbags of items, where you have to elucidate, weigh, and use your judgment whether more (or less) is meant than meets the eye; and after whose perusal you are left for hours, sometimes days, patching together suggestions and wondering what they suggest. Some persons' letters seem almost framed to afford a series of *alibis* for their

personality; not in this thing, oh no! not concerned in such a matter by any means; always elsewhere, never to be clutched.

Yet there are bitterer things in letters from friends than even these, which merely puzzle and distress, but do not infuriate. For I feel cheated by casual glimpses of affairs which concern me not; I resent odd scraps of information, not chosen for my palate; I am indignant at news culled from the public prints, and frantic at thermometric and meteorological intelligence. But stay! There is a case when what seems to come under this heading is really intensely personal, and, therefore, most welcome to the letter receiver. I mean whenever, as happens with some persons, such talk about the weather reveals the real writing soul in its most intimate aspect; wrestling with hated fogs, or prone in the dampish heat, fretted by winds or jubilant in dry, sunny air. And now I find that with this item of weather reports, I am emerging from the region of letters I abhor into the region of letters which I love, or which I lovingly grieve over for some small minor cruelty.

For I am grieved—nay, something more—by that extraordinary (and I hope exclusively feminine) fact, an absence of superscripture. My soul claims some kind of vocative. I would accept a German note of exclamation; I would content myself with an Italian abbreviation, a Preg^mo^, or Chiar^mo^; I could be happy with a solemn and discreet French "Madame et chère amie," or (as may happen) "Monsieur et cher Maître," like the bow with tight-jointed heels and *platbord* hat pressed on to waistcoat, preluding delightful conversation. But not to be quite sure how one is thought of! Whether as *dear*, or *my dear*, or Tom, Dick, or Harry, or soldier, or sailor, or candlestick maker! Nay, at the first glance, not quite to know whether one is the destined reader, or whether even there is a destined reader at all; to be offered an entry out of a pocket-book, a page out of a diary, a selection of *Pensées*, were they Pascal's; a soliloquy, were it Hamlet's: surely lack of sympathy can go no further, nor incapacity of effort be more flagrant than with such writers, usually the very ones the reader most clings to, who put off, as it seems, until directing the envelope, the question of whom they are writing to.

Yet the annoyance they give one is almost compensated when, once in a blue moon, in such a superscription-less epistle, one lights upon a sentence very exclusively directed to one's self; when suddenly out of the vague *tenebrae* of such a letter, there comes, retreating as suddenly, a glance, a grasp, a clasp. It seems quite probable that young Endymion, in his noted love passages with the moon, may have had occasionally supreme felicity of this kind, in a relation otherwise of painfully impersonal and public nature; when, to wit, the goddess, after shining night after night over the seas and plains and hills, occa-

sionally shot from behind a cloud one little gleam, one arrow of light, straight on to Latmos.

But, alack! as Miss Howe wrote to the immortal Clarissa, my paper is at an end, my crowquill worn to the stump. So I can only add as postscript to such of my dear friends as write the letters which my soul abhors, that I hope, beg, entreat they will at least write them to me often.

* * *

GEORGE GISSING

Gissing, who has often been likened to Dickens, on whom he wrote an illuminating study, was in reality quite unlike him. Both men had experienced hardships but they reacted to those hardships very differently. Dickens recognized social ills and the sight made him angry but he never ceased to believe that a cure was possible. Gissing depicted those ills without any faith that they could ever be remedied. This pessimism, joined to a lack of humour, prevented such novels as *Workers of the Dawn*, *The Unclassed*, *Demos*, *Grub Street*, and *The Odd Women* from achieving the popularity which they deserve. He could write delightfully about books and travel, and the book entitled *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* shows his style at its best. He was born in 1857 and died in 1903.

The following passage is reprinted from *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* by permission of Mr. A. C. Gissing.

MY OLD PENHOLDER

FOR more than a week my pen has lain untouched. I have written nothing for seven whole days, not even a letter. Except during one or two bouts of illness, such a thing never happened in my life before. In my life; the life, that is, which had to be supported by anxious toil; the life which was not lived for living's sake, as all life should be, but under the goad of fear. The earning of money should be a means to an end; for more than thirty years—I began to support myself at sixteen—I had to regard it as the end itself.

I could imagine that my old penholder feels reproachfully towards me. Has it not served me well? Why do I, in my happiness, let it lie there neglected, gathering dust? The same penholder that has lain against my forefinger day after day, for—how many years? Twenty, at least; I remember buying it at a shop in Tottenham Court Road. By the same token I bought that day a paper-weight, which cost me a whole shilling—an extravagance which made me tremble. The penholder shone with its new varnish, now it is plain brown wood from end to end. On my forefinger it has made a callosity.

Old companion, yet old enemy! How many a time have I taken it up, loathing the necessity, heavy in head and heart, my hand shaking, my eyes sick-dazzled! How I dreaded the white page I had to foul with ink! Above all, on days such as this, when the blue eyes of Spring laughed from between rosy clouds, when the sunlight shimmered upon my table and made me long, long all but to madness, for the scent of the flowering earth, for the green of hillside larches, for the singing of the skylark above the downs. There was a time—it seems further away than childhood—when I took up my pen with eagerness; if my hand trembled it was with hope. But a hope that fooled me, for never a page of my writing deserved to live. I can say that now without bitterness. It was youthful error, and only the force of circumstance prolonged it. The world has done me no injustice; thank Heaven I have grown wise enough not to rail at it for this; And why should any man who writes, even if he write things immortal, nurse anger at the world's neglect? Who asked him to publish? Who promised him a hearing? Who has broken faith with him? If my shoemaker turn me out an excellent pair of boots, and I, in some mood of cantankerous unreason, throw them back upon his hands, the man has just cause of complaint. But your poem, your novel, who bargained with you for it? If it is honest journeywork, yet lacks purchasers, at most you may call yourself a hapless tradesman. If it come from on high, with what decency do you fret and fume because it is not paid for in heavy cash? For the work of man's mind there is one test, and one alone, the judgment of generations yet unborn. If you have written a great book, the world to come will know of it. But you don't care for posthumous glory. You want to enjoy fame in a comfortable armchair. Ah, that is quite another thing. Have the courage of your desire. Admit yourself a merchant, and protest to gods and men that the merchandise you offer is of better quality than much which sells for a high price. You may be right, and indeed it is hard upon you that Fashion does not turn to your stall.

* * *

JOSEPH CONRAD

Teodor Jozef Konrad Korzeniowski was born of Polish parentage in Ukraine in 1857. In 1874 he went to sea, visiting England four years later. He had long wished to sail under the English flag and that desire was now gratified. Till 1894 he continued at sea, becoming finally a master-mariner. Uncertain health made him relinquish the sea, and then his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, was published. After that he devoted his life to literature, producing novels, essays, sketches, and short stories, all enshrining the strange scenes and folk he had beheld in the course of his wanderings. Among his most notable books are

An Outcast of the Islands, The Nigger of the Narcissus, Lord Jim, Youth, Nostromo, The Secret Agent, 'Twixt Land & Sea, Chance, Within the Tides, Victory, The Shadow Line, The Arrow of Gold, The Rescue, and *The Mirror of the Sea.* He died in 1924.

The following essay is taken from *Last Essays* by permission of the Trustee of the Conrad Estate, Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., and Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Co.

CHRISTMAS DAY AT SEA

THEOLOGICALLY Christmas Day is the greatest occasion for rejoicing offered to sinful mankind; but this aspect of it is so august and so great that the human mind refuses to contemplate it steadily, perhaps because of its own littleness, for which, of course, it is in no way to blame. It prefers to concentrate its attention on ceremonial observances, expressive generally of goodwill and festivity, such, for instance, as giving presents and eating plum-puddings. It may be said at once here that from that conventional point of view the spirit of Christmas Day at sea appears distinctly weak. The opportunities, the materials too, are lacking. Of course, the ship's company get a plum-pudding of some sort, and when the captain appears on deck for the first time the officer of the morning greets him with a "Merry Christmas, sir," in a tone only moderately effusive. Anything more would be, owing to the difference in station, not correct. Normally he may expect a return for this in the shape of a "The same to you" of a nicely graduated heartiness. He does not get it always, however.

One Christmas morning, many years ago (I was young then and anxious to do the correct thing), my conventional greeting was met by a grimly scathing "Looks like it, doesn't it?" from my captain. Nothing more. A three days' more or less thick weather had turned frankly into a dense fog, and I had him called according to orders. We were in the chops of the Channel, with the Scilly Isles on a vague bearing within thirty miles of us, and not a breath of wind anywhere. There the ship remained wrapped up in a damp blanket and as motionless as a post stuck right in the way of the wretched steamboats groping blindly in and out of the Channel. I felt I had behaved tactlessly; yet how rude it would have been to have withheld the season's greeting from my captain!

It is very difficult to know what is the right thing to do when one is young. I suffered exceedingly from my gaucherie; but imagine my disgust when in less than half an hour we had the narrowest possible escape from a collision with a steamer which, without the slightest warning sound, appeared like a vague dark blot in the fog on our bow.

She only took on the shape of a ship as she passed within twenty yards of the end of our jib-boom, terrifying us with the furious screeching of her whistle. Her form melted into nothing, long before the end of the beastly noise, but I hope that her people heard the simultaneous yell of execration from thirty-six throats which we sent after her by way of a Christmas greeting. Nothing more at variance with the spirit of peace and goodwill could be imagined; and I must add that I never saw a whole ship's company get so much affected by one of those "close calls" of the sea. We remained jumpy all the morning and consumed our Christmas puddings at noon with restless eyes and straining ears as if under the shadow of some impending marine calamity or other.

On shore, of course, a calamity at Christmas time would hardly take any other shape than that of an avalanche—avalanche of unpaid bills. I think that it is the absence of that kind of danger which makes Christmas at sea rather agreeable on the whole. An additional charm consists in there being no worry about presents. Presents ought to be unexpected things. The giving and receiving of presents at appointed times seems to me a hypocritical ceremony, like exchanging gifts of Dead Sea fruit in proof of sham good-fellowship. But the sea of which I write here is a live sea; the fruits one chances to gather on it may be salt as tears or bitter as death, but they never taste like ashes in the mouth.

In all my twenty years of wandering over the restless waters of the globe I can only remember one Christmas Day celebrated by a present given and received. It was, in my view, a proper live sea transaction, no offering of Dead Sea fruit; and in its unexpectedness perhaps worth recording. Let me tell you first that it happened in the year 1879, long before there was any thought of wireless messages, and when an inspired person trying to prophesy broadcasting would have been regarded as a particularly offensive nuisance and probably sent to a rest-cure home. We used to call them mad-houses then, in our rude, cave-man way.

The daybreak of Christmas Day in the year 1879 was fine. The sun began to shine some time about four o'clock over the sombre expanse of the Southern Ocean in latitude 51; and shortly afterwards a sail was sighted ahead. The wind was light, but a heavy swell was running. Presently I wished a "Merry Christmas" to my captain. He looked still sleepy, but amiable. I reported the distant sail to him and ventured the opinion that there was something wrong with her. He said, "Wrong?" in an incredulous tone. I pointed out that she had all her upper sails furled and that she was brought to the wind, which, in that region of the world, could not be accounted for on any other theory. He took the glasses from me, directed them towards her stripped masts resembling three Swedish safety matches, flying

up and down and waggling to and fro ridiculously in that heaving and austere wilderness of countless water-hills, and returned them to me without a word. He only yawned. This marked display of callousness gave me a shock. In those days I was generally inexperienced and still a comparative stranger in that particular region of the world of waters.

The captain, as is a captain's way, disappeared from the deck; and after a time our carpenter came up the poop-ladder carrying an empty small wooden keg, of the sort in which certain ship's provisions are packed. I said, surprised, "What do you mean by lugging this thing up here, Chips?"—"Captain's orders, sir," he explained shortly.

I did not like to question him further, and so we only exchanged Christmas greetings and he went away. The next person to speak to me was the steward. He came running up the companion-stairs: "Have you any old newspapers in your room, sir?"

We had left Sydney, N.S.W., eighteen days before. There were several old Sydney *Heralds, Telegraphs,* and *Bulletins* in my cabin, besides a few home papers received by the last mail. "Why do you ask, steward?" I enquired naturally. "The captain would like to have them," he said.

And even then I did not understand the inwardness of these eccentricities. I was only lost in astonishment at them. It was eight o'clock before we had closed with that ship, which, under her short canvas and heading nowhere in particular, seemed to be loafing aimlessly on the very threshold of the gloomy home of storms. But long before that hour I had learned from the number of the boats she carried that this nonchalant ship was a whaler. She was the first whaler I had ever seen. She had hoisted the Stars and Stripes at her peak, and her signal flags had told us already that her name was: "*Alaska*—two years out from New York—east from Honolulu—two hundred and fifteen days on the cruising ground."

We passed, sailing slowly, within a hundred yards of her; and just as our steward started ringing the breakfast-bell, the captain and I held aloft, in good view of the figures watching us over her stern, the keg, properly headed up and containing, besides an enormous bundle of old newspapers, two boxes of figs in honour of the day. We flung it far out over the rail. Instantly our ship, sliding down the slope of a high swell, left it far behind in our wake. On board the *Alaska* a man in a fur cap flourished an arm; another, a much be-whiskered person, ran forward suddenly. I never saw anything so ready and so smart as the way that whaler, rolling desperately all the time, lowered one of her boats. The Southern Ocean went on tossing the two ships like a juggler his gilt balls, and the microscopic white speck of the boat seemed to come into the game instantly, as if shot out from a catapult on the enormous and lonely stage. That Yankee whaler lost not

a moment in picking up her Christmas present from the English wool-clipper.

Before we had increased the distance very much she dipped her ensign in thanks, and asked to be reported "All well, with a catch of three fish." I suppose it paid them for two hundred and fifteen days of risk and toil, away from the sounds and sights of the inhabited world, like outcasts devoted, beyond the confines of mankind's life, to some enchanted and lonely penance.

Christmas Days at sea are of varied character, fair to middling and down to plainly atrocious. In this statement I do not include Christmas Days on board passenger ships. A passenger is, of course, a brother (or sister) and quite a nice person in a way, but his Christmas Days are, I suppose, what he wants them to be: the conventional festivities of an expensive hotel included in the price of his ticket.

* * *

FRANCIS THOMPSON

The story of Francis Thompson is one of the most pathetic and romantic stories in our literature. It should be read in full in Everard Meynell's *Life*. Born at Preston in 1859, he was educated at Ushaw College and Owens College where it was intended that he should study medicine and follow in his father's footsteps. A misunderstanding caused him to break off all home associations and he went to London where he was rescued from destitution by Wilfrid and Alice Meynell. His poems soon attracted the notice of the most competent judges, and he also wrote some very fine prose. His privations had, however, undermined his health and, despite the care which was lavished upon him, he died of consumption in 1907. His works have been published in three volumes, two of poetry and one of prose, by Messrs. Burns, Oates, and Washbourne.

The essay on "Shelley" is here printed in an abbreviated form which has been prepared by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell and is now reproduced by his permission.

SHELLEY

WE HAVE among us at the present day no lineal descendant, in the poetical order, of Shelley; and any such offspring of the abundingly spontaneous Shelley is hardly possible, still less likely, on account of the defect by which (we think) contemporary poetry in general, as compared with the poetry of the early nineteenth century, is mildewed. That defect is the predominance of art over inspiration, of body over soul.

An age that is ceasing to produce child-like children cannot produce a Shelley. For both as poet and man he was essentially a child.

We, of this self-conscious, incredulous generation, sentimentalize our children, analyse our children, think we are endowed with a special capacity to sympathize and identify ourselves with children; we play at being children. And the result is that we are not more child-like, but our children are less child-like. It is so tiring to stoop to the child, so much easier to lift the child up to you. Know you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of to-day. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its own soul; it is to live in a nutshell and to count yourself the king of infinite space; it is

> To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And a heaven in a wild flower,
> Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour;

it is to know not as yet that you are under sentence of life, nor petition that it be commuted into death. When we become conscious in dreaming that we dream, the dream is on the point of breaking; when we become conscious in living that we live, the ill dream is but just beginning. Now if Shelley was but too conscious of the dream, in other respects Dryden's false and famous line might have been applied to him with very much less than its usual untruth.[1] To the last, in a degree uncommon even among poets, he retained the idiosyncrasy of childhood, expanded and matured without differentiation. To the last he was the enchanted child.

This was, as is well known, patent in his life. It is as really, though perhaps less obviously, manifest in his poetry, the sincere effluence of his life. And it may not, therefore, be amiss to consider whether it was conditioned by anything beyond his congenital nature. For our part, we believe it to have been equally largely the outcome of his early and long isolation. Men given to retirement and abstract study are notoriously liable to contract a certain degree of childlikeness: and if this be the case when we segregate a man, how much more when we segregate a child! It is when they are taken into the solution of school-life that children, by the reciprocal interchange of influence with their fellows, undergo the series of reactions which converts them from

[1] Wordsworth's adaptation of it, however, is true. Men are not "children of a larger growth," but the child *is* father of the man, since the parent is only partially reproduced in his offspring.

children into boys and from boys into men. The intermediate stage must be traversed to reach the final one.

Now Shelley never could have been a man, for he never was a boy. And the reason lay in the persecution which over-clouded his school-days. Of that persecution's effect upon him he has left us, in *The Revolt of Islam,* a picture which to many or most people very probably seems a poetical exaggeration; partly because Shelley appears to have escaped physical brutality, partly because adults are inclined to smile tenderly at childish sorrows which are not caused by physical suffering. That he escaped for the most part bodily violence is nothing to the purpose. It is the petty malignant annoyance recurring hour by hour, day by day, month by month, until its accumulation becomes an agony; it is this which is the most terrible weapon that boys have against their fellow boy, who is powerless to shun it because, unlike the man, he has virtually no privacy. His is the torture which the ancients used, when they anointed their victim with honey and exposed him naked to the restless fever of the flies. He is a little St. Sebastian, sinking under the incessant flight of shafts which skilfully avoid the vital parts.

We do not, therefore, suspect Shelley of exaggeration: he was, no doubt, in terrible misery. Those who think otherwise must forget their own past. Most people, we suppose, *must* forget what they were like when they were children: otherwise they would know that the griefs of their childhood were passionate abandonment, *déchirants* (to use a characteristically favourite phrase of modern French literature) as the griefs of their maturity. Children's griefs are little, certainly; but so is the child, so is its endurance, so is its field of vision, while its nervous impressionability is keener than ours. Grief is a matter of relativity; the sorrow should be estimated by its proportion to the sorrower; a gash is as painful to one as an amputation to another. Pour a puddle into a thimble, or an Atlantic into Etna; both thimble and mountain overflow. Adult fools! Would not the angels smile at *our* griefs, were not angels too wise to smile at them?

So beset, the child fled into the tower of his own soul, and raised the drawbridge. He threw out a reserve, encysted in which he grew to maturity unaffected by the intercourses that modify the maturity of others into the thing we call a man. The encysted child developed until it reached years of virility, until those later Oxford days in which Hogg encountered it; then, bursting at once from its cyst and the university, it swam into a world not illegitimately perplexed by such a whim of the gods. It was, of course, only the completeness and duration of this seclusion—lasting from the gate of boyhood to the threshold of youth—which was peculiar to Shelley. Most poets, probably, like most saints, are prepared for their mission by an initial segregation, as the seed is buried to germinate: before they can utter

the oracle of poetry, they must first be divided from the body of men. It is the severed head that makes the seraph.

Shelley's life frequently exhibits in him the magnified child. It is seen in his fondness for apparently futile amusements, such as the sailing of paper boats. This was, in the truest sense of the word, child-like; not, as it is frequently called and considered, childish. That is to say, it was not a mindless triviality, but the genuine child's power of investing little things with imaginative interest; the same power, though differently devoted, which produced much of his poetry. Very possibly in the paper boat he saw the magic bark of Laon and Cythna, or

> That thinnest boat
> In which the mother of the months is borne
> By ebbing night into her western cave.

In fact, if you mark how favourite an idea, under varying forms, is this in his verse, you will perceive that all the charmed boats which glide down the stream of his poetry are but glorified resurrections of the little paper argosies which trembled down the Isis.

And the child appeared no less often in Shelley the philosopher than in Shelley the idler. It is seen in his repellent no less than in his amiable weaknesses; in the unteachable folly of a love that made its goal its starting-point, and firmly expected spiritual rest from each new divinity, though it had found none from the divinities antecedent. For we are clear that this was no mere straying of sensual appetite, but a straying, strange and deplorable, of the spirit; that (contrary to what Coventry Patmore has said) he left a woman not because he was tired of her arms, but because he was tired of her soul. When he found Mary Shelley wanting, he seems to have fallen into the mistake of Wordsworth, who complained in a charming piece of unreasonableness that his wife's love, which had been a fountain, was now only a well:

> Such change, and at the very door
> Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

Wordsworth probably learned, what Shelley was incapable of learning, that love can never permanently be a fountain. A living poet, in an article [1] which you almost fear to breathe upon lest you should flutter some of the frail pastel-like bloom, has said the thing: "Love itself has tidal moments, lapses and flows due to the metrical rule of the interior heart." Elementary reason should proclaim this true. Love is an affection, its display an emotion: love is the air, its display is the wind. An affection may be constant; an emotion can no more be

[1] *The Rhythm of Life*, by Alice Meynell.

constant than the wind can constantly blow. All, therefore, that a man can reasonably ask of his wife is that her love should be indeed a well. A well; but a Bethesda-well, into which from time to time the angel of tenderness descends to trouble the waters for the healing of the beloved. Such a love Shelley's second wife appears unquestionably to have given him. Nay, she was content that he should veer while she remained true; she companioned him intellectually, shared his views, entered into his aspirations, and yet—yet, even at the date of *Epipsychidion,* the foolish child, her husband, assigned her the part of moon to Emilia Viviani's sun, and lamented that he was barred from final, certain, irreversible happiness by a cold and callous society. Yet few poets were so mated before, and no poet was so mated afterwards, until Browning stooped and picked up a fair-coined soul that lay rusting in a pool of tears.

In truth, his very unhappiness and discontent with life, in so far as it was not the inevitable penalty of the ethical anarch, can only be ascribed to this same child-like irrationality—though in such a form it is irrationality hardly peculiar to Shelley. Pity, if you will, his spiritual ruins, and the neglected early training which was largely their cause; but the pity due to his outward circumstances has been strangely exaggerated. The obloquy from which he suffered he deliberately and wantonly courted. For the rest, his lot was one that many a young poet might envy. He had faithful friends, a faithful wife, an income small but assured. Poverty never dictated to his pen; the designs on his bright imagination were never etched by the sharp fumes of necessity.

If, as has chanced to others—as chanced, for example, to Mangan—outcast from home, health, and hope, with a charred past and a bleared future, an anchorite without detachment, and self-cloistered without self-sufficingness, deposed from a world which he had not abdicated, pierced with thorns which formed no crown, a poet hopeless of the bays, and a martyr hopeless of the palm, a land cursed against the dews of love, an exile banned and proscribed even from the innocent arms of childhood—he were burning helpless at the stake of his unquenchable heart, then he might have been inconsolable, then might he have cast the gorge at life, then have cowered in the darkening chamber of his being, tapestried with mouldering hopes, and hearkened to the winds that swept across the illimitable wastes of death. But no such hapless lot was Shelley's as that of his own contemporaries—Keats, half-chewed in the jaws of London and spit dying on to Italy; De Quincey, who, if he escaped, escaped rent and maimed from those cruel jaws; Coleridge, whom they dully mumbled for the major portion of his life. Shelley had competence, poetry, love; yet he wailed that he could lie down like a tired child and weep away his life of care! Is it ever so with you, sad brother? is it ever so with me? and is

there no drinking of pearls except they be dissolved in biting tears? "Which of us has his desire, or having it, is satisfied?"

Coming to Shelley's poetry, we peep over the wild mask of revolutionary metaphysics, and we see the winsome face of the child. Perhaps none of his poems is more purely and typically Shelleian than *The Cloud,* and it is interesting to note how essentially it springs from the faculty of make-believe. The same thing is conspicuous, though less purely conspicuous, throughout his singing; it is the child's faculty of make-believe raised to the *n*th power. He is still at play, save only that his play is such as manhood stops to watch, and his playthings are those which the gods give their children. The universe is his box of toys. He dabbles his fingers in the day-fall. He is gold-dusty with tumbling amidst the stars. He makes bright mischief with the moon. The meteors nuzzle their noses in his hand. He teases into growling the kennelled thunder, and laughs at the shaking of its fiery chain. He dances in and out of the gates of heaven: its floor is littered with his broken fancies. He runs wild over the fields of ether. He chases the rolling world. He gets between the feet of the horses of the sun. He stands in the lap of patient Nature, and twines her loosened tresses after a hundred wilful fashions, to see how she will look nicest in his song.

After all, perhaps the poems on which the lover of Shelley leans most lovingly, which he has oftenest in his mind, which best represent Shelley to him, and which he instinctively reverts to when Shelley's name is mentioned, are some of the shorter poems and detached lyrics. Here Shelley forgets for a while all that ever makes his verse turbid; forgets that he is anything but a poet, forgets sometimes that he is anything but a child; lies back in his skiff, and looks at the clouds. He plays truant from earth, slips through the wicket of fancy into heaven's meadow, and goes gathering stars. Here we have that absolute virgin-gold of song which is the scarcest among human products, and for which we can go to but three poets—Coleridge, Shelley, Chopin,[1] and perhaps we should add Keats:—*Christabel* and *Kubla Khan; The Skylark, The Cloud,* and *The Sensitive Plant* (in its first two parts); *The Eve of Saint Agnes* and *The Nightingale;* certain of the Nocturnes; these things make very quintessentialized loveliness. It is attar of poetry.

Remark, as a thing worth remarking, that, although Shelley's diction is at other times singularly rich, it ceases in these poems to be rich, or to obtrude itself at all; it is imperceptible; his Muse has become a veritable Echo, whose body has dissolved from about her voice. Indeed, when his diction is richest, nevertheless the poetry so dominates

[1] Such analogies between masters in sister arts are often interesting. In some respects, is not Brahms the Browning of music?

the expression that we only feel the latter as an atmosphere until we are satiated with the former; then we discover with surprise to how imperial a vesture we had been blinded by gazing on the face of his song. A lesson, this, deserving to be conned by a generation so opposite in tendency as our own: a lesson that in poetry, as in the Kingdom of God, we should not take thought too greatly wherewith we shall be clothed, but seek first[2] the spirit, and all these things will be added unto us.

Enchanted child, born into a world unchildlike; spoiled darling of Nature, playmate of her elemental daughters; "pard-like spirit, beautiful and swift," laired amidst the burning fastnesses of his own fervid mind; bold foot along the verges of precipitous dream; light leaper from crag to crag of inaccessible fancies; towering Genius, whose soul rose like a ladder between heaven and earth with the angels of song ascending and descending it;—he is shrunken into the little vessel of death, and sealed with the unshatterable seal of doom, and cast down deep below the rolling tides of Time. Mighty meat for little guests, when the heart of Shelley was laid in the cemetery of Caius Cestius! Beauty, music, sweetness, tears—the mouth of the worm has fed of them all. Into that sacred bridal-gloom of death where he holds his nuptials with eternity let not our rash speculations follow him; let us hope rather that as, amidst material nature, where our dull eyes see only ruin, the finer eye of science has discovered life in putridity and vigour in decay, seeing dissolution even and disintegration, which in the mouth of man symbolize disorder, to be in the works of God undeviating order, and the manner of our corruption to be no less wonderful than the manner of our health,—so, amidst the supernatural universe, some tender undreamed surprise of life in doom awaited that wild nature, which, worn by warfare with itself, its Maker, and all the world, now

> Sleeps, and never palates more the dug,
> The beggar's nurse, and Cæsar's.

* * *

A. C. BENSON

Arthur Christopher Benson, the son of Edward White Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in 1862. For nearly twenty years he was a master at Eton, and in 1904 he was elected Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge. He became Master in 1915 and held this post until his death in 1925. Besides being an essayist, he was a poet, a biographer, and an educationist. His essays convey the charm and

[2] Seek *first*, not seek *only*.

kindly tolerance that were so characteristic of him. Among his most noted volumes are *The House of Quiet*, *The Thread of Gold*, *From a College Window*, and *The Altar Fire*.

The following passage is taken from *The Thread of Gold* by permission of Messrs. John Murray and Messrs. E. P. Dutton and Company, who own the copyright therein.

OXFORD

THERE are certain things in the world that are so praiseworthy that it seems a needless, indeed an almost laughable thing to praise them; such things are love and friendship, food and sleep, spring and summer; such things, too, are the wisest books, the greatest pictures, the noblest cities. But for all that I mean to try and make a little hymn in prose in honour of Oxford, a city I have seen but seldom, and which yet appears to me one of the most beautiful things in the world.

I do not wish to single out particular buildings, but to praise the whole effect of the place, such as it seemed to me on a day of bright sun and cool air, when I wandered hour after hour among the streets, bewildered and almost intoxicated with beauty, feeling as a poor man might who has pinched all his life, and made the most of single coins, and who is brought into the presence of a heap of piled-up gold, and told that it is all his own.

I have seen it said in foolish books that it is a misfortune to Oxford that so many of the buildings have been built out of so perishable a vein of stone. It is indeed a misfortune in one respect, that it tempts men of dull and precise minds to restore and replace buildings of incomparable grace, because their outline is so exquisitely blurred by time and decay. I remember myself, as a child, visiting Oxford, and thinking that some of the buildings were almost shamefully ruinous of aspect; now that I am wiser I know that we have in these battered and fretted palace-fronts a kind of beauty that fills the mind with an almost despairing sense of loveliness, till the heart aches with gratitude, and thrills with the desire to proclaim the glory of the sight aloud.

These black-fronted blistered façades, so threatening, so sombre, yet screening so bright and clear a current of life; with the tender green of budding spring trees, chestnuts full of silvery spires, glossy-leaved creepers clinging, with tiny hands, to cornice and parapet, give surely the sharpest and most delicate sense that it is possible to conceive of the contrast on which the essence of so much beauty depends. To pass through one of these dark and smoke-stained courts, with every line mellowed and harmonized, as if it had grown up so out of the earth; to find oneself in a sunny pleasaunce, carpeted with velvet turf,

and set thick with flowers, makes the spirit sigh with delight. Nowhere in the world can one see such a thing as those great gate-piers, with a cognizance a-top, with a grille of iron-work between them, all sweetly entwined with some slim vagrant creeper, that give a glimpse and a hint—no more—of a fairy-land of shelter and fountains within. I have seen such palaces stand in quiet and stately parks, as old, as majestic, as finely proportioned as the buildings of Oxford; but the very blackness of the city air, and the drifting smoke of the town, gives that added touch of grimness and mystery that the country airs cannot communicate. And even fairer sights are contained within; those panelled, dark-roofed halls, with their array of portraits gravely and intently regarding the strangers; the chapels, with their splendid classical screens and stalls, rich and dim with ancient glass. The towers, domes, and steeples; and all set not in a mere paradise of lawns and glades, but in the very heart of a city, itself full of quaint and ancient houses, but busy with all the activity of a brisk and prosperous town; thereby again giving the strong and satisfying sense of contrast, the sense of eager and every-day cares and pleasures, side by side with these secluded havens of peace, the courts and cloister, where men may yet live a life of gentle thought and quiet contemplation, untroubled, nay, even stimulated, by the presence of a bustling life so near at hand, which yet may not intrude upon the older dream.

I do not know whether my taste is entirely trustworthy, but I confess that I find the Italianate and classical buildings of Oxford finer than the Gothic buildings. The Gothic buildings are quainter, perhaps, more picturesque, but there is an air of solemn pomp and sober dignity about the classical buildings that harmonizes better with the sense of wealth and grave security that is so characteristic of the place. The Gothic buildings seem a survival, and have thus a more romantic interest, a more poetical kind of association. But the classical porticos and façades seem to possess a nobler dignity, and to provide a more appropriate setting for modern Oxford; because the spirit of Oxford is more the spirit of the Renaissance than the spirit of the Schoolmen; and personally I prefer that ecclesiasticism should be more of a flavour than a temper; I mean that though I rejoice to think that sober ecclesiastical influences contribute a serious grace to the life of Oxford, yet I am glad to feel that the spirit of the place is liberal rather than ecclesiastical. Such traces as one sees in the chapels of the Oxford Movement, in the shape of paltry stained glass, starved reredoses, modern Gothic woodwork, would be purely deplorable from the artistic point of view, if they did not possess a historical interest. They speak of interrupted development, an attempt to put back the shadow on the dial, to return to a narrower and more rigid tone, to put old wine into new bottles, which betrays a want of confidence in the expansive power of God. I hate with a deep-seated hatred all such attempts to

bind and confine the rising tide of thought. I want to see religion vital and not formal, elastic and not cramped by precedent and tradition. And thus I love to see worship enshrined in noble classical buildings, which seem to me to speak of a desire to infuse the intellectual spirit of Greece, the dignified imperialism of Rome into the more timid and secluded ecclesiastical life, making it fuller, larger, more free, more deliberate.

But even apart from the buildings, which are after all but the body of the place, the soul of Oxford, its inner spirit, is what lends it its satisfying charm. On the one hand, it gives the sense of the dignity of the intellect; one reflects that here can be lived lives of stately simplicity, of high enthusiasm, apart from personal wealth, and yet surrounded by enough of seemly dignity to give life the charm of grave order and quiet solemnity. Here are opportunities for peaceful and congenial work, to the sound of melodious bells; uninterrupted hours, as much society of a simple kind as a man can desire, and the whole with a background of exquisite buildings and rich gardens. And then, too, there is the tide of youthful life that floods every corner of the place. It is an endless pleasure to see the troops of slim and alert young figures, full of enjoyment and life, with all the best gifts of life, health, work, amusement, society, friendship, lying ready to their hand. The sense of this beating and thrilling pulse of life circulating through these sombre and splendid buildings is what gives the place its inner glow; this life full of hope, of sensation, of emotion, not yet shadowed or disillusioned or weary, seems to be as the fire on the altar, throwing up its sharp darting tongues of flame, its clouds of fragrant smoke, giving warmth and significance and a fiery heart to a sombre shrine.

And so it is that Oxford is in a sort a magnetic pole for England; a pole not, perhaps, of intellectual energy, or strenuous liberalism, or clamorous aims, or political ideas; few, perhaps, of the sturdy forces that make England potently great, centre there. The greatness of England is, I suppose, made up by her breezy, loud-voiced sailors, her lively, plucky soldiers, her ardent, undefeated merchants, her tranquil administrators; by the stubborn adventurous spirit that makes itself at home everywhere, and finds it natural to assume responsibilities. But to Oxford set the currents of what may be called intellectual emotion, the ideals that may not make for immediate national greatness, but which, if delicately and faithfully nurtured, hold out at least a hope of affecting the intellectual and spiritual life of the world. There is something about Oxford which is not in the least typical of England, but typical of the larger brotherhood that is independent of nationalities; that is akin to the spirit which in any land and in every age has produced imperishable monuments of the ardent human soul. The tribe of Oxford is the tribe from whose heart sprang the Psalms of

David; Homer and Sophocles, Plato and Virgil, Dante and Goethe are all of the same divine company. It may be said that John Bull, the sturdy angel of England, turns his back slightingly upon such influences; that he regards Oxford as an incidental ornament of his person, like a seal that jingles at his fob. But all generous and delicate spirits do her a secret homage, as a place where the seeds of beauty and emotion, of wisdom and understanding, are sown, as in a secret garden. Hearts such as these, even whirling past that celestial city, among her poor suburbs, feel an inexpressible thrill at the sight of her towers and domes, her walls and groves. *Quam dilecta sunt tabernacula*, they will say; and they will breathe a reverent prayer that there may be no leading into captivity and no complaining in her streets.

* * *

STEPHEN GWYNN

Born in 1864, Mr. Stephen Gwynn was educated at St. Columba's College, Rathfarnham, and at Brasenose College, Oxford. After some years spent in London on journalism he returned to Ireland and for twelve years sat in Parliament as a Nationalist member. He enlisted as a private in the Great War and was awarded the Legion of Honour. The sanity of his views on Irish affairs has won for him a respectful hearing from all parties. He has written essays, such as *For Second Reading* and *Duffer's Luck;* biographies, such as *Tennyson* and *Thomas Moore* (English Man of Letters); novels, such as *John Maxwell's Marriage* and *The Glade in the Forest;* poems; and many important books on Ireland.

The following essay has been reprinted from the volume entitled *For Second Reading* by Mr. Gwynn's permission.

THE LUXURY OF DOING GOOD

BENEVOLENCE, said Hobbes, is a love of power and delight in the exercise of it. Yet this trenchant definition never provoked from a somewhat self-righteous mankind such protest as was aroused by La Rochefoucauld when he laid it down that virtue is for the most part only self-love in disguise. Perhaps mankind felt instinctively that the Frenchman had overstated his case, but were not equally sure of confuting Mr. Hobbes. For, although there exist men and women with whom a conscious desire to gratify self is the predominant motive —who habitually think not simply of what they are going to do, but of the way in which their sensations will be affected by it—yet these persons are rare and exceptional: not less rare than those other who think constantly how to gratify their neighbour. Action in itself is

pleasant; inaction, except by contrast, destitute of pleasure; and when the ordinary mortal does something outside his strict business, this supererogatory act is generally performed for the natural satisfaction which attends the accomplishing of any end.

Low down in the scale of evolution men are impelled to act by the pains and pleasures attending hunger and thirst. Yet even here it is pretty certain that if one savage sees another whittling incompetently at a stick in the endeavour to make a bow, he will take the tool and go to work himself sooner than watch the job bungled. He will not be deterred by the notion that in equipping a rival he sacrifices something of his own superiority, for the excellent reason that the idea will not occur to him. He will do the thing just for the sake of doing it right—desiring, so far as he consciously has a desire in the matter, the glow of gratification that attends any successful exhibition of power just as surely as pleasure accompanies the filling of a stomach.

In the sphere of life that most of us think about, hunger and thirst have only a theoretical existence. We assume that we shall always have enough to eat and drink: necessity is not crudely before us. We work, no doubt, in order to get more of the good things of life, but we work also very largely to let off steam.

It is an axiom of conduct that if you want a thing done you should go to the busiest man of your acquaintance; and we all act upon this maxim without reflecting that it concedes the theory that benevolence is a love of power. How else but on Hobbes's principle should one account for this practical paradox? Is it to be supposed that busy men are more sympathetic than idle ones? Hardly. If you want sympathy, some one to be sorry for you or glad with you, an idle person is the best recipient of your confidence. You will occupy a larger and a more enduring place in his mind. But two things go to make up benevolence—sympathy and energy—and for practical purposes energy is the more important. It might seem that sympathy lies nearer to the fount of action, and is, therefore, to be ranked as a cause, whereas energy is merely a condition. And this is true in a sense. Stupidity and indolence are the two hindrances to benevolence, and of the two, stupidity—that is, dulness of perception—is the more potent obstacle; for the stupid man will never realize in sympathy the need of help, nor leap to a sight of the means to supply it; the indolent man may be moved by sympathy to shake off his indolence.

But my contention is that most acts of practical benevolence are traceable not to sympathy, the desire to help, but to energy, the instinct to do. Every energetic man is a reservoir of unexhausted force, for hardly anyone is employed up to the limit of his capacity. No salary will buy the monopoly of a man's power, and very few have so much work to do for themselves that there is no energy left over. Certain pursuits really engross men, such as the passionate study of an art,

or the business of money-making, when the object is not to gain what money will buy but simply the acquisition of wealth. But these cases are abnormal; and if you go to the ordinary successful busy man with a request for help in a difficulty, you propound to him a practical problem: What is to be done? If he likes you, it will of course give him pleasure to gratify you, but the exertion by which he does so will be pleasant for its own sake. And even if you are perfectly indifferent to him, you will still have propounded a problem to one who has the habit of doing things and the instinct for getting them done. His mind by its very nature and training instantly turns to think of an expedient. He sees something that can be done, and in nine cases out of ten cannot resist what is really an appetite to do it; the surplus energy flows as naturally as water when you turn a tap. Moreover, it is a positive pain to a capable man to see labour misapplied, capacity going to waste, or a life bungled; and if he interposes, it is often from just the same motive as the savage with the bow; he helps because he cannot endure to see the work being done badly.

It is worth while to emphasize this aspect of benevolence, because so many people, especially in England, dislike the idea of "giving trouble," as they call it—but in reality the idea of laying themselves under an obligation. Yet, if they could realize how they themselves would welcome the chance of doing a good turn to some acquaintance, there would be less of this ungenerous reluctance. It is the sense of obligation which breeds ingratitude; for ingratitude is not merely indifference, but an ill-suppressed malignity. "I owe him one" is the thought of the ungrateful, and it bears a sinister meaning. The cheerful and natural philosophy of Hobbes would tell us that we have afforded another human being the delight of exercising power which he loves, and if we are the gainers by the transaction, why, so is our friend. The other view of the relation degrades benevolence almost to the level of the charity which confers an official merit on the giver and an official stigma on the recipient. Yet the Charity Organization Society would, I am sure, disclaim all pretension to benevolence, and whatever unfortunate has gone to them for help will amply bear them out in the disclaimer. The essence of benevolence lies in giving help which is both given and received with pleasure, and no right-minded person can feel a pleasure in giving what cannot be accepted without a sense of humiliation. The Society I speak of, which stands for the perfected type of scientific almsgiving, concerns itself with strict justice —administration of the indispensable aid. Benevolence does not look so closely into the title to assistance, does not ask whether he or she has failed to save money, but helps simply for the sake of helping. In this way benevolence is often first-cousin to jobbery; and for jobbery also there is a good word to be said.

Most of the help which is worth giving or getting takes the shape

of assisting another person to find work. And that help comes to us chiefly (we are taught to believe) from our connexions, but in my own experience of life much more often from our competitors—that is, from those in our own profession. One hears a great deal of professional jealousies, and very little of professional good-fellowship, yet the latter is in reality a much more potent factor, and for good reasons. To begin with, every man knows the ropes more or less in his own trade; professional knowledge suggests means to help which would be less evident to an outsider. But this does not account for the willingness to put those means into operation—a willingness which, nevertheless, can be quite easily explained.

The career of each of us is to himself or herself a matter of the most vivid interest; every colour, every shade, every turn in a life is acutely realized by the person who lives it! Yet to the rest of the world, as Mr. Hardy has remarked in more than one page of melancholy comment, each of us is only a passing thought—to our nearest and dearest, only a thought of frequent recurrence. The points at which our fortunes are least inadequately realized by our neighbours, at which they assume to others something of the importance that they wear to ourselves, are the points of community. The ambitions, the hopes and fears, of a son who is a barrister must be always somewhat vague to his father, the doctor; but every other barrister is interested by them almost as keenly as a woman by all that relates to a girl friend's marriage. That is the cause of professional sympathy—a feeling so strong that for one man who stops to reflect that the profession is already overcrowded, and competition increasing in severity, you shall find twenty who gladly give a hand to the man on a lower rung of the ladder, regardless of the fact that he may one day be jostling them off it. They will remember to put in a word where a word is useful, when another friend with equal opportunities, but not of the craft, would forget, just because the young man's fortunes resemble their own as one woman's love affairs resemble another's. Professional benevolence is, in short, very nearly allied to matchmaking, and, like nearly all the most lovable traits in human nature, has no claim to be regarded as a disinterested virtue. The healthy-minded energetic man does not stop to consider whether the man he backs is the ideal person for a given employment—he simply desires to get the job for the man whom he is backing. I have no doubt that the trouble which he will take for almost an absolute stranger is unconsciously prompted by the desire to effectuate his own personality, to utilize some of his spare energy in accomplishing an end with which he has identified himself.

Perhaps it is wrong to deny that this natural propensity of a strong physical and mental constitution should rank as a virtue when it is exercised on behalf of mere friends or acquaintances. But if so, I am

sure it should not be condemned as nepotism or jobbery when allowed free play on behalf of kinsfolk. We praise the Scotch for the clannish tendency which they seldom fail to manifest when a Scot is among the candidates for an employment (the Irish, I am glad to say, exhibit something of the same characteristic), yet what is this but the most extended nepotism? Even if we grant that the ideally benevolent man will be too delicate to make interest for himself or his nearest kin, but will wear himself out in the endeavour to serve some stray aspirant who, either by promise of merit or need of help, has excited his sympathy (and I have known such a character), yet it must be urged that the men who go far out of their way to secure good things for their relatives are as a rule the industrious, active men who do service to the world. They are also men who, in default of a kinsman, will be exceedingly prone to serve a stranger sooner than leave undone a good turn which they see their way to doing. Of course, like all other creditable and harmless propensities, this may be exaggerated into a defect, just as every truth may be pushed into a heresy; but upon the whole nepotism lies nearer to virtue than to vice, and a race or family in whom the instinct of racial benevolence has died out is in extreme danger of dying out itself. But it is superfluous to labour a defence of jobbery. The virtue of nepotism is commended to us by the highest examples: State, Church, and Law lend it illustrious sanction.

On the other hand, there is a kind of benevolence which runs very easily into an odious failing, but is the sort which popularly figures as an accredited virtue. This is the benevolence which seeks to substitute its own virtuous will for its neighbour's possibly very inferior inclination; which is always willing, and even anxious, to help its neighbour, but not as the neighbour desires to be helped. There is no need nowadays—or there should not be—to condemn the other-worldliness which sees in the human beings placed at a disadvantage the occasion for a profitable investment of good works. And yet there are still those who argue that Socialism is impious because it seeks to abolish poverty, whereas we are promised that the poor shall be always with us, to afford stepping-stones to celestial preferment. This, however, is not benevolence. The benevolence of which I speak is the benevolence of a benevolent despotism—love of power passing into a tyranny. Your respectable Christian who knows a young man bent upon becoming an actor, an agitator, or a journalist, or undertaking any other of the pursuits disapproved by respectable Christians, and who offers that young man a stool in his counting-house, may be doing a wise thing, but is not really benevolent. And yet in many cases he talks of black ingratitude because the would-be artist or politician does not thank him for the offer, and perhaps rejects it with contumely. Such, says the respectable Christian, is the reward of benevolence. But benevolence consists in helping your neighbour to attain an end

which he desires, not in substituting an end which you would be glad to see him attain by your help. Much of the assistance offered with the keenest sense of merit in the offering is about as valuable or appropriate as the ugly sack stitched at a working-party is to the South Sea islander whose harmonious proportions it is designed to conceal. Sometimes the offer is accepted, and, whether it be the sack or the high stool, it seldom does much good to the person who accepts what is foreign to his (or her) whole nature and desires.

Yet suppose it is accepted, and suppose everything turns out well, who is to be grateful? I who accepted, let us say, or you who volunteered the help? I may be grateful for assistance that I sought or desired, but this was none of my seeking. The conventions demand that I should feel gratitude, but the morality of the case is very different. To interpolate our personality into the life of another human being is always a liberty, it may be an impertinence; and if the act, however kindly meant, be taken in a friendly spirit, we should be amply contented. We have had the satisfaction of doing what we designed to do; we have probably been thanked for it. The gratitude that endures should be on our side, for there is no truer truth than that we love those whom we have benefited—another person being converted into a monument of our good deed. To be angry because some one else will not efface his will to let us have this satisfaction is really iniquitous. Benevolence is not often self-sacrifice—it is always self-realization; and to attempt to realize ourselves at some one else's expense, to express our own personality by sacrificing our neighbour's, is one of the wickednesses which not only escape the social stigma, but continually masquerade as virtues.

In short, the luxury of doing good is a luxury, and, like all luxuries, carries with it a temptation. We cannot do too much good; but we can easily administer to ourselves too often the pleasant sensation of having done it, neglecting to establish thoroughly the necessary premise that we have provided a pleasurable sensation to our neighbour. Very often does the sense that we have "done him good" arise out of the triumphant conviction that we have administered to our neighbour a sensation the reverse of pleasurable.

* * *

W. B. YEATS

William Butler Yeats was born in 1865 in Sligo. Just as Scott was nurtured upon the ballads of the Border so Yeats from his boyhood has been familiar with Irish legendary lore and this has coloured all that he has written. He was one of the pioneers in the Irish Renaissance, being closely associated in this movement with Lionel Johnson and Katherine Tynan. He believed that the real nation con-

sisted not in forms of government or customs but in "certain ardent ideas and a high attitude of mind." These he has laboured all his life to express. He has endeavoured to reveal the Irish nation to itself and to make it conscious of its own high calling. With Lady Gregory he founded the Irish National Theatre, which became later the Abbey Theatre. He has written poetry, plays, stories, and essays.

The following essay is taken from *The Cutting of an Agate* by permission of the author and Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

THE TRAGIC THEATRE

I DID not find a word in the printed criticism of Synge's *Deirdre of the Sorrows* about the qualities that made certain moments seem to me the noblest tragedy, and the play was judged by what seemed to me but wheels and pulleys necessary to the effect, but in themselves nothing.

Upon the other hand, those who spoke to me of the play never spoke of these wheels and pulleys, but if they cared at all for the play, cared for the things I cared for. One's own world of painters, of poets, of good talkers, of ladies who delight in Ricard's portraits or Debussy's music, all those whose senses feel instantly every change in our mother the moon, saw the stage in one way; and those others who look at plays every night, who tell the general playgoer whether this play or that play is to his taste, saw it in a way so different that there is certainly some body of dogma—whether in the instincts or in the memory, pushing the ways apart. A printed criticism, for instance, found but one dramatic moment, that when Deirdre in the second act overhears her lover say that he may grow weary of her; and not one—if I remember rightly—chose for praise or explanation the third act which alone had satisfied the author, or contained in any abundance those sentences that were quoted at the fall of the curtain and for days after.

Deirdre and her lover, as Synge tells the tale, returned to Ireland, though it was nearly certain they would die there, because death was better than broken love, and at the side of the open grave that had been dug for one and would serve for both, quarrelled, losing all they had given their life to keep. "Is it not a hard thing that we should miss the safety of the grave and we trampling its edge?" That is Deirdre's cry at the outset of a reverie of passion that mounts and mounts till grief itself has carried her beyond grief into pure contemplation. Up to this the play has been a Master's unfinished work, monotonous and melancholy, ill-arranged, little more than a sketch of what it would have grown to, but now I listened breathless to sentences that may never pass away, and as they filled or dwindled in their civility of sorrow, the player, whose art had seemed clumsy and incomplete, like the writing itself, ascended into that tragic ecstasy which

is the best that art—perhaps that life—can give. And at last when Deirdre, in the paroxysm before she took her life, touched with compassionate fingers him that had killed her lover, we knew that the player had become, if but for a moment, the creature of that noble mind which had gathered its arts in waste islands, and we too were carried beyond time and persons to where passion, living through its thousand purgatorial years, as in the wink of an eye, becomes wisdom; and it was as though we too had touched and felt and seen a disembodied thing.

One dogma of the printed criticism is that if a play does not contain definite character, its constitution is not strong enough for the stage, and that the dramatic moment is always the contest of character with character.

In poetical drama there is, it is held, an antithesis between character and lyric poetry, for lyric poetry—however much it move you when read out of a book—can, as these critics think, but encumber the action. Yet when we go back a few centuries and enter the great periods of drama, character grows less and sometimes disappears, and there is much lyric feeling, and at times a lyric measure will be wrought into the dialogue, a flowing measure that had well-befitted music, or that more lumbering one of the sonnet. Suddenly it strikes us that character is continuously present in comedy alone, and that there is much tragedy, that of Corneille, that of Racine, that of Greece and Rome, where its place is taken by passions and motives, one person being jealous, another full of love or remorse or pride or anger. In writers of tragi-comedy (and Shakespeare is always a writer of tragi-comedy) there is indeed character, but we notice that it is in the moments of comedy that character is defined, in Hamlet's gaiety let us say; while amid the great moments, when Timon orders his tomb, when Hamlet cries to Horatio "absent thee from felicity awhile," when Anthony names "Of many thousand kisses the poor last," all is lyricism, unmixed passion, "the integrity of fire." Nor does character even attain to complete definition in these lamps ready for the taper, no matter how circumstantial and gradual the opening of events, as it does in Falstaff who has no passionate purpose to fulfil, or as it does in Henry the Fifth whose poetry, never touched by lyric heat, is oratorical; nor when the tragic reverie is at its height do we say, "How well that man is realized, I should know him were I to meet him in the street," for it is always ourselves that we see upon the stage, and should it be a tragedy of love we renew, it may be, some loyalty of our youth, and go from the theatre with our eyes dim for an old love's sake.

I think it was while rehearsing a translation of *Les Fourberies de Scapin* in Dublin, and noticing how passionless it all was, that I saw what should have been plain from the first line I had written, that

tragedy must always be a drowning and breaking of the dykes that separate man from man, and that it is upon these dykes comedy keeps house. But I was not certain of the site of that house (one always hesitates when there is no testimony but one's own); till somebody told me of a certain letter of Congreve's. He describes the external and superficial expressions of "humour" on which farce is founded and then defines "humour" itself, the foundation of comedy as a "singular and unavoidable way of doing anything peculiar to one man only, by which his speech and actions are distinguished from all other men," and adds to it that "passions are too powerful in the sex to let humour have its course," or as I would rather put it, that you can find but little of what we call character in unspoiled youth, whatever be the sex, for as he indeed shows in another sentence, it grows with time like the ash of a burning stick, and strengthens towards middle life till there is little else at seventy years.

Since then I have discovered an antagonism between all the old art and our new art of comedy and understand why I hated at nineteen years Thackeray's novels and the new French painting. A big picture of *cocottes* sitting at little tables outside a *café,* by some followers of Manet's, was exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy while I was a student at a life class there, and I was miserable for days. I found no desirable place, no man I could have wished to be, no woman I could have loved, no Golden Age, no lure for secret hope, no adventure with myself for theme out of that endless tale I told myself all day long. Years after I saw the *Olympia* of Manet at the Luxembourg and watched it without hostility indeed, but as I might some incomparable talker whose precision of gesture gave me pleasure, though I did not understand his language. I returned to it again and again at intervals of years, saying to myself, "some day I will understand"; and yet, it was not until Sir Hugh Lane brought the *Eva Gonzales* to Dublin, and I had said to myself, "How perfectly that woman is realized as distinct from all other women that have lived or shall live" that I understood I was carrying on in my own mind that quarrel between a tragedian and a comedian which the Devil on Two Sticks in Le Sage showed to the young man who had climbed through the window.

There is an art of the flood, the art of Titian when his Ariosto, and his Bacchus and Ariadne, give new images to the dreams of youth, and of Shakespeare when he shows us Hamlet, broken away from life by the passionate hesitations of his reverie. And we call this art poetical, because we must bring more to it than our daily mood if we would take our pleasure; and because it takes delight in the moment of exaltation, of excitement, of dreaming (or in the capacity for it, as in that still face of Ariosto's that is like some vessel soon to be full of wine). And there is an art that we call real, because character

can only express itself perfectly in a real world, being the world's creature, and because we understand it best through a delicate discrimination of the senses which is but entire wakefulness, the daily mood grown cold and crystalline.

We may not find either mood in its purity, but in mainly tragic art one distinguishes devices to exclude or lessen character, to diminish the power of that daily mood, to cheat or blind its too clear perception. If the real world is not altogether rejected, it is but touched here and there, and into the places we have left empty we summon rhythm, balance, pattern, images that remind us of vast passions, the vagueness of past times, all the chimeras that haunt the edge of trance; and if we are painters, we shall express personal emotion through ideal form, a symbolism handled by the generations, a mask from whose eyes the disembodied looks, a style that remembers many masters, that it may escape contemporary suggestion; or we shall leave out some element of reality as in Byzantine painting, where there is no mass, nothing in relief; and so it is that in the supreme moment of tragic art there comes upon one that strange sensation as though the hair of one's head stood up. And when we love, if it be in the excitement of youth, do we not also, that the flood may find no stone to convulse, no wall to narrow it, exclude character or the signs of it by choosing that beauty which seems unearthly because the individual woman is lost amid the labyrinth of its lines as though life were trembling into stillness and silence, or at last folding itself away? Some little irrelevance of line, some promise of character to come, may indeed put us at our ease, "give more interest" as the humour of the old man with the basket does to Cleopatra's dying; but should it come as we had dreamed in love's frenzy to our dying for that woman's sake, we would find that the discord had its value from the tune.

Nor have we chosen illusion in choosing the outward sign of that moral genius that lives among the subtlety of the passions, and can for her moment make her of the one mind with great artists and poets. In the studio we may indeed say to one another "character is the only beauty," but when we choose a wife, as when we go to the gymnasium to be shaped for woman's eyes, we remember academic form, even though we enlarge a little the point of interest and choose "a painter's beauty," finding it the more easy to believe in the fire because it has made ashes.

When we look at the faces of the old tragic paintings, whether it is in Titian or in some painter of medieval China, we find there sadness and gravity, a certain emptiness even, as of a mind that waited the supreme crisis (and indeed it seems at times as if the graphic art, unlike poetry which sings the crisis itself, were the celebration of waiting).

Whereas in modern art, whether in Japan or Europe, "vitality" (is not that the great word of the studios?), the energy, that is to say, which is under the command of our common moments, sings, laughs, chatters, or looks its busy thoughts.

Certainly we have here the Tree of Life and that of the knowledge of Good and Evil which is rooted in our interest, and if we have forgotten their differing virtues it is surely because we have taken delight in a confusion of crossing branches. Tragic art, passionate art, the drowner of dykes, the confounder of understanding, moves us by setting us to reverie, by alluring us almost to the intensity of trance. The persons upon the stage, let us say, greaten till they are humanity itself. We feel our minds expand convulsively or spread out slowly like some moon-brightened image-crowded sea. That which is before our eyes perpetually vanishes and returns again in the midst of the excitement it creates, and the more enthralling it is, the more do we forget it.

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A. G. GARDINER

Alfred George Gardiner was editor of the *Daily News* for seventeen years, and gathered round him a number of the most brilliant writers of the day. His own literary work includes monumental biographies, like that of Sir William Harcourt; character sketches, like those contained in the volumes *Prophets, Priests, and Kings*, and *Pillars of Society*; and essays, like those delightful musings which he has issued under the name of "Alpha of the Plough." He was born in 1865.

The following essay is reprinted from the volume entitled *Leaves in the Wind* by permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

A FELLOW-TRAVELLER

I DO not know which of us got into the carriage first. Indeed I did not know he was in the carriage at all for some time. It was the last train from London to a Midland town—a stopping train, an infinitely leisurely train, one of those trains which give you an understanding of eternity. It was tolerably full when it started, but as we stopped at the suburban stations the travellers alighted in ones and twos, and by the time we had left the outer ring of London behind I was alone—or, rather, I thought I was alone.

There is a pleasant sense of freedom about being alone in a carriage that is jolting noisily through the night. It is liberty and unrestraint in a very agreeable form. You can do anything you like. You can

talk to yourself as loud as you please and no one will hear you. You can have that argument out with Jones and roll him triumphantly in the dust without fear of a counterstroke. You can stand on your head and no one will see you. You can sing, or dance a two-step, or practise a golf stroke, or play marbles on the floor without let or hindrance. You can open the window or shut it without provoking a protest. You can open both windows or shut both. Indeed, you can go on opening them and shutting them as a sort of festival of freedom. You can have any corner you choose and try all of them in turn. You can lie at full length on the cushions and enjoy the luxury of breaking the regulations and possibly the heart of D.O.R.A. herself. Only D.O.R.A. will not know that her heart is broken. You have escaped even D.O.R.A.

On this night I did not do any of these things. They did not happen to occur to me. What I did was much more ordinary. When the last of my fellow-passengers had gone I put down my paper, stretched my arms and my legs, stood up and looked out of the window on the calm summer night through which I was journeying, noting the pale reminiscence of day that still lingered in the northern sky; crossed the carriage and looked out of the other window; lit a cigarette, sat down, and began to read again. It was then that I became aware of my fellow-traveller. He came and sat on my nose. . . . He was one of those wingy, nippy, intrepid insects that we call, vaguely, mosquitoes. I flicked him off my nose, and he made a tour of the compartment, investigated its three dimensions, visited each window, fluttered round the light, decided that there was nothing so interesting as that large animal in the corner, came and had a look at my neck.

I flicked him off again. He skipped away, took another jaunt round the compartment, returned, and seated himself impudently on the back of my hand. It is enough, I said: magnanimity has its limits. Twice you have been warned that I am some one in particular, that my august person resents the tickling impertinences of strangers. I assume the black cap. I condemn you to death. Justice demands it, and the court awards it. The counts against you are many. You are a vagrant; you are a public nuisance; you are travelling without a ticket; you have no meat coupon. For these and many other misdemeanours you are about to die. I struck a swift, lethal blow with my right hand. He dodged the attack with an insolent ease that humiliated me. My personal vanity was aroused. I lunged at him with my hand, with my paper; I jumped on the seat and pursued him round the lamp; I adopted tactics of feline cunning, waiting till he had alighted, approaching with a horrible stealthiness, striking with a sudden and terrible swiftness.

It was all in vain. He played with me, openly and ostentatiously,

like a skilful matador finessing round an infuriated bull. It was obvious that he was enjoying himself, that it was for this that he had disturbed my repose. He wanted a little sport, and what sport like being chased by this huge, lumbering windmill of a creature, who tasted so good and seemed so helpless and so stupid? I began to enter into the spirit of the fellow. He was no longer a mere insect. He was developing into a personality, an intelligence that challenged the possession of this compartment with me on equal terms. I felt my heart warming towards him and the sense of superiority fading. How could I feel superior to a creature who was so manifestly my master in the only competition in which we had ever engaged? Why not be magnanimous again? Magnanimity and mercy were the noblest attributes of man. In the exercise of these high qualities I could recover my prestige. At present I was a ridiculous figure, a thing for laughter and derision. By being merciful I could reassert the moral dignity of man and go back to my corner with honour. I withdraw the sentence of death, I said, returning to my seat. I cannot kill you, but I can reprieve you. I do it.

I took up my paper and he came and sat on it. Foolish fellow, I said, you have delivered yourself into my hands. I have but to give this respectable weekly organ of opinion a smack on both covers and you are a corpse, neatly sandwiched between an article on "Peace Traps" and another on "The Modesty of Mr. Hughes." But I shall not do it. I have reprieved you, and I will satisfy you that when this large animal says a thing he means it. Moreover, I no longer desire to kill you. Through knowing you better I have come to feel—shall I say?—a sort of affection for you. I fancy that St. Francis would have called you "little brother." I cannot go so far as that in Christian charity and civility. But I recognize a more distant relationship. Fortune has made us fellow-travellers on this summer night. I have interested you and you have entertained me. The obligation is mutual and it is founded on the fundamental fact that we are fellow-mortals. The miracle of life is ours in common and its mystery too. I suppose you don't know anything about your journey. I'm not sure that I know much about mine. We are really, when you come to think of it, a good deal alike—just apparitions that are and then are not, coming out of the night into the lighted carriage, fluttering about the lamp for a while and going out into the night again. Perhaps. . . .

"Going on to-night, sir?" said a voice at the window. It was a friendly porter giving me a hint that this was my station. I thanked him and said I must have been dozing. And seizing my hat and stick I went out into the cool summer night. As I closed the door of the compartment I saw my fellow-traveller fluttering round the lamp. . . .

* * *

E. V. LUCAS

THE range of Mr. Lucas's activities and the long list of his published work must ever provide food for astonishment. He is journalist, biographer, publisher, essayist, editor, and anthologist. He has written humorous skits, biographies, novels, and travel-books with equal ease. He finds time to sit at Mr. Punch's table, as well as to preside over the destinies of a famous publishing house. He is the biographer of Charles Lamb, and his own essays are a sufficient indication that the master's mantle of ease and whimsical humour has fallen upon him. He was born in 1868.

The following essay is reprinted from *Fireside and Sunshine* by permission of Messrs. Methuen and Co., Ltd.

THE TOWN WEEK

IT IS odd that "Mondayish" is the only word which the days of the week have given us; since Monday is not alone in possessing a positive and peculiar character. Why not "Tuesdayish" or "Wednesdayish"? Each word would convey as much meaning to me, "Tuesdayish" in particular, for Monday's cardinal and reprehensible error of beginning the business week seems to me almost a virtue compared with Tuesday's utter flatness. To begin a new week is no fault at all, though tradition has branded it as one. To begin is a noble accomplishment; but to continue dully, to be the tame follower of a courageous beginner, to be the second day in a week of action, as in Tuesday's case—that is deplorable, if you like.

Monday can be flat enough, but in a different way from Tuesday. Monday is flat because one has been idling, perhaps unconsciously absorbing notions of living like the lilies; because so many days must pass before the week ends; because yesterday is no more. But Tuesday has the sheer essential flatness of nonentity; Tuesday is nothing. If you would know how absolutely nothing it is, go to a week-end hotel at, say Brighton, and stay on after the Saturday-to-Monday population has flitted. On Tuesday you touch the depths. So does the menu—no *chef* ever exerted himself for a Tuesday guest. Tuesday is also very difficult to spell, many otherwise cultured ladies putting the *e* before the *u:* and why not? What right has Tuesday to any preference?

With all its faults, Monday has a positive character. Monday brings a feeling of revolt; Tuesday, the base craven, reconciles us to the machine. I am not surprised that the recent American revivalists held no meetings on Mondays. It was a mark of their astuteness; they knew that the wear and tear of overcoming the Monday feeling

of the greater part of their audience would exhaust them before their magnetism began to have play; while a similarly stubborn difficulty would confront them in the remaining portion sunk in apathy by the thought that to-morrow would be Tuesday. It is this presage of certain tedium which has robbed Monday evening of its "glittering star." Yet since nothing so becomes a flat day as the death of it, Tuesday evening's glittering star (it is Wordsworth's phrase) is of the brightest—for is not the dreary day nearly done, and is not to-morrow Wednesday the bland?

With Wednesday, the week stirs itself, turns over, begins to wake. There are matinées on Wednesday; on Wednesdays some of the more genial weekly papers come out. The very word has a good honest round air—Wednesday. Things, adventures, might happen very naturally on Wednesday; but that nothing ever happened on a Tuesday I am convinced. In summer Wednesday has often close finishes at Lord's, and it is a day on which one's friends are pretty sure to be accessible. On Monday they may not have returned from the country; on Friday they have begun to go out of town again; but on Wednesday they are here, at home—are solid. I am sure it is my favourite day.

(Even politicians, so slow as a rule to recognize the kindlier, more generous, side of life, realized for many years that Wednesday was a day on which they had no right to conduct their acrimonious business for more than an hour or so. Much of the failure of the last Government may be traced to their atheistical decision no longer to remember Wednesday to keep it holy.)

On Thursday the week falls back a little; the stirring of Wednesday is forgotten; there is a return to the folding of the hands. I am not sure that Thursday has not become the real day of rest. That it is a good honest day is the most that can be said for it. It is certainly not Thor's day any longer—if my reading of the character of the blacksmith-god is true. There is nothing strong and downright and fine about it. Compared with Tuesday's small beer, Thursday is almost champagne; but none the less they are related. One can group them together. If I were a business man, I should, I am certain, sell my shares at a loss on Monday and at a profit on Wednesday and Friday, but on Tuesday and Thursday I should get for them exactly what I gave.

I group Friday with Wednesday as a day that can be friendly to me, but it has not Wednesday's quality. Wednesday is calm, assured, urbane; Friday allows itself to be a little flurried and excited. Wednesday stands alone; Friday to some extent throws in its lot with Saturday. Friday is too busy. Too many papers come out, too many bags are packed, on Friday. But herein, of course, is some of its virtue; it is the beginning of the end, the forerunner of Saturday and Sunday. If

anticipation, as the moralists say, is better than the realization, Friday is perhaps the best day of the week, for one spends much of it in thinking of the morrow and what of good it should bring forth. Friday's greatest merit is perhaps that it paves the way to Saturday and the cessation of work. That it ever was really unlucky I greatly doubt.

And so we come to Saturday and Sunday. But here the analyst falters, for Saturday and Sunday pass from the region of definable days. Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and Friday, these are days with a character fixed more or less for all. But Saturday and Sunday are what we individually make of them. In one family they are friends, associates; in another as ill-assorted as Socrates and Xantippe. For most of us Saturday is not exactly a day at all, it is a collection of hours, part work, part pleasure, and all restlessness. It is a day that we plan for, and therefore it is often a failure. I have no distinct and unvarying impression of Saturday, except that trains are full and late and shops shut too early.

Sunday even more than Saturday is different as people are different. To the godly it is a day of low tones, its minutes go by muffled; to the children of the godly it is eternity. To the ungodly it is a day jeopardized by an interest in barometers that is almost too poignant. To one man it is an interruption of the week; to another it is the week itself, and all the rest of the days are but preparations for it. One cannot analyze Saturday and Sunday.

But Monday? There we are on solid ground again. Monday—but I have discussed Monday already: that is one of its principal characteristics, that it is always coming round again, pretending to be new. It is always the same in reality.

* * *

HILAIRE BELLOC

One would expect versatility of a man who was born near Paris (in 1870), was brought up in Sussex, served in the French army, and took a degree at Oxford. Mr. Belloc has not disappointed this expectation. He is essayist, poet, historian, biographer, and novelist. He has written nonsense rhymes, travel-books, treatises on warfare and statecraft. It is difficult to say what he has not done. Yet amid all this diversity he pursues a single aim, and you are never left in doubt concerning his position. This, at a time when so many writers seem unsure of their objective, makes Mr. Belloc stand out from among his fellows. He has a fine feeling for the romance of the past and the mystery of high places. He has also a keen sense of the colour of words which is the more effective because he always uses words economically.

The following essay is reprinted from *Esto Perpetua* by permission of Messrs. Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd.

BARBARY

WHEN a man first sees Africa, if it is just before the rising of the sun, he perceives, right up against a clean horizon, what appear to be islands standing out distinct and sharp above the sea.

At this hour a wind is often blowing from the eastward, and awakens the Mediterranean as though it came purposely at dawn to make the world ready for the morning. The little waves leap up beneath it, steep towards their shadows, and the bows of the ship that had surged all night through a rolling calm begin, as sailors say, to "speak": the broken water claps and babbles along the side. In this way, if he has good fortune, the traveller comes upon a new land. It is that land, shut off from all the rest between the desert and the sea, which the Arabs call the Island of the West, the Maghreb, but to which we in Europe for many hundred years have given the name of Barbary: as it says in the song about freedom:

> . . . as large as a Lion reclined
> By the rivers of Barbary.

It is the shore that runs, all built upon a single plan, from Tunis and the Gulf of Carthage to Tangier; that was snatched from Europe in one great cavalry charge twelve hundred years ago, and is now at last again in the grasp of Europe.

For many hours the traveller will sail towards it until at last he comes to a belt of smooth water which, in such weather, fringes all that coast, and then he finds that what he saw at morning was not a line of islands, but the tops of high hills standing in a range along the sea: they show darker against a stronger light and a more southerly sun as he draws nearer, and beyond them he sees far off inland the first buttress mountains which hold up the plateaux of Atlas.

The country which he thus approaches differs in its fortune and history from all others in the world. The soil and the relief of the Maghreb, coupled with its story, have made it peculiar and, as it were, a symbol of the adventures of Europe. Ever since our Western race began its own life and entered into its ceaseless struggle against the East, this great bastion has been held and lost again; occupied by our enemies and then taken back as our power re-arose. The Phœnician ruled it; Rome wrested it back; it fell for the last time when the Roman Empire declined; its reconquest has been the latest fruit of our recovery.

It is thoroughly our own. The race that has inhabited it from its origin and still inhabits it is our race; its climate and situation are ours; it is at the furthest limit from Asia; it is an opposing shore of our inland sea; it links Sicily to Spain; it retains in every part of it the

Menhirs and the Dolmens, the great stones at which our people sacrificed when they began to be men: yet even in the few centuries of written history foreign gods have twice been worshipped there and foreign rulers have twice held it for such long spaces of time that twice its nature has been forgotten. Even to-day, when our reoccupation seems assured, we speak of it as though it were by some right originally Oriental, and by some destiny certain to remain so. During the many centuries of our decline and of our slow resurrection, these countries were first cut off so suddenly and so clean from Christendom, next steeped so long and so thoroughly in an alien religion and habit of law, that their very dress and language changed; and until a man has recognized at last the faces beneath the turbans, and has seen and grown familiar with the great buildings which Rome nowhere founded more solidly than in these provinces, he is deceived by the tradition of an immediate past and by the externals of things: he sees nothing but Arabs around him, and feels himself an intruder from a foreign world.

Of this Eastern spirit, which is still by far the strongest to be found in the states of Barbary, an influence meets one long before one has made land. The little ships all up and down the Mediterranean, and especially as one nears the African coast, are in their rig and their whole manner Arabian.

There is a sort of sail which may be called the original of all sails. It is the sail with which antiquity was familiar. It brought the ships to Tenedos and the Argo carried it. The Norwegians had it when they were pirates a thousand years ago. They have it still. It is nearer a lug-sail than anything else, and indeed our Deal luggers carry something very near it. It is almost a square sail, but the yard has a slight rake and there is a bit of a peak to it. It is the kind of sail which seems to come first into the mind of any man when he sets out to use the wind. It is to be seen continually to-day hoisted above small boats in the north of Europe.

But this sail is too simple. It will not go close to the wind, and in those light and variable airs which somehow have no force along the deck, it hangs empty and makes no way because it has no height.

Now when during that great renaissance of theirs in the seventh century the Arabs left their deserts and took to the sea, they became for a short time in sailing, as in philosophy, the teachers of their new subjects. They took this sail which they had found in all the ports they had conquered along this coast—in Alexandria, in Cyrene, in Carthage, in Cæsarea—they lightened and lengthened the yard, they lifted the peak up high, they clewed down the foot, and very soon they had that triangular *lateen* sail which will, perhaps, remain when every other evidence of their early conquering energy has disappeared. With such a sail they drove those first fleets of theirs which gave them at once the islands and the commerce of the Mediterranean. It was the

sail which permitted their invasion of the northern shores and the unhappy subjection of Spain.

We Europeans have for now some seven hundred years, from at least the Third Crusade, so constantly used this gift of Islam that we half forget its origin. You may see it in all the Christian harbours of the Mediterranean to-day, in every port of the Portuguese coast, and here and there as far north as the Channel. It is not to be seen beyond Cherbourg, but in Cherbourg it is quite common. The harbour-boats that run between the fleet and the shore hoist these lateens. Yet it is not of our own making, and, indeed, it bears a foreign mark which is very distinct, and which puzzles every northerner when first he comes across this sail: it reefs along the yard. Why it should do so neither history nor the men that handle it can explain, since single sails are manifestly made to reef from the foot to the leach, where a man can best get at them. Not so the lateen. If you carry too much canvas and the wind is pressing her you must take it in from aloft, or, it must be supposed, lower the whole on deck. And this foreign, quaint, unusual thing which stamps the lateen everywhere is best seen when the sail is put away in harbour. It does not lie down along the deck as do ours in the north, but right up along the yard, and the yard itself is kept high at the masthead, making a great bow across the sky, and (one would say) tempting Providence to send a gale and wreck it. Save for this mark—which may have its uses, but seems to have none and to be merely barbaric—the lateen is perfect in its kind, and might be taken with advantage throughout the world (as it is throughout all this united sea) for the uniform sail. For this kind of sail is, for small craft, the neatest and the swiftest in the world, and, in a general way, will lie closer to the wind than any other. Our own fore-and-aft rig is nothing else but a lateen cut up into mainsail, foresail, and jib, for the convenience of handling.

The little ships, so rigged, come out like heralds far from the coast to announce the old dominion of the East and of the religion that made them: of the united civilization that has launched them over all its seas, from east of India to south of Zanzibar and right out here in the western place which we are so painfully recovering. They are the only made thing, the only *form* we accepted from the Arab: and we did well to accept it. The little ships are a delight.

You see them everywhere. They belong to the sea and they animate it. They were similar as waves are similar: they are different as waves are different. They come into a hundred positions against the light. They heel and run with every mode of energy.

There is nothing makes a man's heart so buoyant as to see one of the little ships bowling along breast-high towards him, with the wind and the clouds behind it, careering over the sea. It seems to have borrowed something of the air and something of the water, and to

unite them both and to be their offspring and also their bond. When they are middle-way over the sea towards one under a good breeze, the little ships are things to remember.

So it is when they carry double sail and go, as we say of our schooners, "wing and wing." For they can carry two sails when the wind is moderate, and especially when the vessel is running before it, but these two sails are not carried upon two masts, but both upon the same mast. The one is the common or working sail, carried in all weathers. The other is a sort of spinnaker, of which you may see the yard lying along decks in harbour or triced up a little by the halyard, so as to swing clear of the hands.

When the little ships come up like this with either sail well out and square and their course laid straight before the general run of a fresh sea, rolling as they go, it is as though the wind had a friend and companion of its own, understanding all its moods, so easily and rapidly do they arrive towards the shore. A little jib (along this coast at least) is bent along the forestay, and the dark line of it marks the swing and movement of the whole. So also when you stand and look from along their wake and see them leaving for the horizon along a slant of the Levantine, with the breeze just on their quarter and their laden hulls careening a trifle to leeward, you would say they were great birds, born of the sea, and sailing down the current from which they were bred. The peaks of their tall sails have a turn to them like the wing-tips of birds, especially of those darting birds which come up to us from the south after winter and shoot along their way.

Moreover, the sails of these little ships never seem to lose the memory of power. Their curves and fullness always suggest a movement of the hull. Very often at sunset when the dead calm reflects things unbroken like an inland pond, the topmost angle of these lateens catches some hesitating air that stirs above, and leads it down the sail, so that a little ripple trembles round the bows of the boat, though all the water beside them is quite smooth, and you see her gliding in without oars. She comes along in front of the twilight, as gradual and as silent as the evening, and seems to be impelled by nothing more substantial than the advance of darkness.

It is with such companions to proclaim the title of the land that one comes round under a point of hills and enters harbour.

* * *

H. M. TOMLINSON

H. M. Tomlinson was born in 1873. He has written many essays picturing scenes at home and abroad, life in quiet homeland ports, adventures on the high seas, the stillness of the jungle, and the monotony of a great desert. He always writes with the knowledge that is born

of a keen thirst for adventure. In 1909, for instance, he shipped as purser in the tramp steamer *Capella* with his wages "lawfully recorded at a shilling per month." The result is seen in that entrancing book *The Sea and the Jungle*. Other books of his include *Old Junk, London River, Waiting for Daylight, Tidemarks, Under the Red Ensign*, and *Gift of Fortune*. He has also written a novel entitled *Gallions Reach*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Old Junk* by permission of the author and Messrs. Jonathan Cape, Ltd.

BED-BOOKS AND NIGHT-LIGHTS

THE rain flashed across the midnight window with a myriad feet. There was a groan in outer darkness, the voice of all nameless dreads. The nervous candle-flame shuddered by my bedside. The groaning rose to a shriek, and the little flame jumped in a panic, and nearly left its white column. Out of the corners of the room swarmed the released shadows. Black spectres danced in ecstasy over my bed. I love fresh air, but I cannot allow it to slay the shining and delicate body of my little friend the candle-flame, the comrade who ventures with me into the solitudes beyond midnight. I shut the window.

They talk of the candle-power of an electric bulb. What do they mean? It cannot have the faintest glimmer of the real power of my candle. It would be as right to express, in the same inverted and foolish comparison, the worth of "those delicate sisters, the Pleiades." That pinch of star dust, the Pleiades, exquisitely remote in deepest night, in the profound where light all but fails, has not the power of a sulphur match; yet, still apprehensive to the mind though tremulous on the limit of vision, and sometimes even vanishing, it brings into distinction those distant and difficult hints—hidden far behind all our verified thoughts—which we rarely properly view. I should like to know of any great arc-lamp which could do that. So the starlike candle for me. No other light follows so intimately an author's most ghostly suggestion. We sit, the candle and I, in the midst of the shades we are conquering, and sometimes look up from the lucent page to contemplate the dark hosts of the enemy with a smile before they overwhelm us; as they will, of course. Like me, the candle is mortal; it will burn out.

As the bed-book itself should be a sort of night-light, to assist its illumination, coarse lamps are useless. They would douse the book. The light for such a book must accord with it. It must be, like the book, a limited, personal, mellow, and companionable glow; the solitary taper beside the only worshipper in a sanctuary. That is why nothing can compare with the intimacy of candle-light for a bed-book. It is a

living heart, bright and warm in central night, burning for us alone, holding the gaunt and towering shadows at bay. There the monstrous spectres stand in our midnight room, the advance guard of the darkness of the world, held off by our valiant little glim, but ready to flood instantly and founder us in original gloom.

The wind moans without; ancient evils are at large and wandering in torment. The rain shrieks across the window. For a moment, for just a moment, the sentinel candle is shaken, and burns blue with terror. The shadows leap out instantly. The little flame recovers, and merely looks at its foe the darkness, and back to its own place goes the old enemy of light and man. The candle for me, tiny, mortal, warm, and brave, a golden lily on a silver stem!

"Almost any book does for a bed-book," a woman once said to me. I nearly replied in a hurry that almost any woman would do for a wife; but that is not the way to bring people to conviction of sin. Her idea was that the bed-book is soporific, and for that reason she even advocated the reading of political speeches. That would be a dissolute act. Certainly you would go to sleep; but in what a frame of mind! You would enter into sleep with your eyes shut. It would be like dying, not only unshriven, but in the act of guilt.

What book shall it shine upon? Think of Plato, or Dante, or Tolstoy, or a Blue Book for such an occasion! I cannot. They will not do—they are no good to me. I am not writing about you. I know those men I have named are transcendent, the greater lights. But I am bound to confess at times they bore me. Though their feet are clay and on earth, just as ours, their stellar brows are sometimes dim in remote clouds. For my part, they are too big for bed-fellows. I cannot see myself, carrying my feeble and restricted glim, following (in pyjamas) the statuesque figure of the Florentine where it stalks, aloof in its garb of austere pity, the sonorous deeps of Hades. Hades! Not for me; not after midnight! Let those go who like it.

As for the Russian, vast and disquieting, I refuse to leave all, including the blankets and the pillow, to follow him into the gelid tranquillity of the upper air, where even the colours are prismatic spicules of ice, to brood upon the erratic orbit of the poor mud-ball below called earth. I know it is my world also; but I cannot help that. It is too late, after a busy day, and at that hour, to begin overtime on fashioning a new and better planet out of cosmic dust. By breakfast-time, nothing useful would have been accomplished. We should all be where we were the night before. The job is far too long, once the pillow is nicely set.

For the truth is, there are times when we are too weary to remain attentive and thankful under the improving eye, kindly but severe, of the seers. There are times when we do not wish to be any better than we are. We do not wish to be elevated and improved. At midnight,

away with such books! As for the literary pundits, the high priests of the Temple of Letters, it is interesting and helpful occasionally for an acolyte to swinge them a good hard one with an incense-burner, and cut and run, for a change, to something outside the rubrics. Midnight is the time when one can recall, with ribald delight, the names of all the Great Works which every gentleman ought to have read, but which some of us have not. For there is almost as much clotted nonsense written about literature as there is about theology.

There are few books which go with midnight, solitude, and a candle. It is much easier to say what does not please us then than what is exactly right. The book must be, anyhow, something benedictory by a sinning fellow-man. Cleverness would be repellent at such an hour. Cleverness, anyhow, is the level of mediocrity to-day; we are all too infernally clever. The first witty and perverse paradox blows out the candle. Only the sick in mind crave cleverness, as a morbid body turns to drink. The late candle throws its beams a great distance; and its rays make transparent much that seemed massy and important. The mind at rest beside that light, when the house is asleep, and the consequential affairs of the urgent world have diminished to their right proportions because we see them distantly from another and a more tranquil place in the heavens where duty, honour, witty arguments, controversial logic on great questions, appear such as will leave hardly a trace of fossil in the indurated mud which presently will cover them—the mind then certainly smiles at cleverness.

For though at that hour the body may be dog-tired, the mind is white and lucid, like that of a man from whom a fever has abated. It is bare of illusions. It has a sharp focus, small and starlike, as a clear and lonely flame left burning by the altar of a shrine from which all have gone but one. A book which approaches that light in the privacy of that place must come, as it were, with honest and open pages.

I like Heine then, though. His mockery of the grave and great, in those sentences which are as brave as pennants in a breeze, is comfortable and sedative. One's own secret and awkward convictions, never expressed because not lawful and because it is hard to get words to bear them lightly, seem then to be heard aloud in the mild, easy, and confident diction of an immortal whose voice has the blitheness of one who has watched, amused and irreverent, the high gods in eager and secret debate on the best way to keep the gilt and trappings on the body of the evil they have created.

That first-rate explorer, Gulliver, is also fine in the light of the intimate candle. Have you read lately again his Voyage to the Houyhnhnms? Try it alone again in quiet. Swift knew all about our contemporary troubles. He has got it all down. Why was he called a misanthrope? Reading that last voyage of Gulliver in the select inti-

macy of midnight I am forced to wonder, not at Swift's hatred of mankind, not at his satire of his fellows, not at the strange and terrible nature of this genius who thought that much of us, but how it is that after such a wise and sorrowful revealing of the things we insist on doing, and our reasons for doing them, and what happens after we have done them, men do not change. It does seem impossible that society could remain unaltered, after the surprise its appearance should have caused it as it saw its face in that ruthless mirror. We point instead to the fact that Swift lost his mind in the end. Well, that is not a matter for surprise.

Such books, and France's *Isle of Penguins*, are not disturbing as bed-books. They resolve one's agitated and outraged soul, relieving it with some free expression for the accusing and questioning thoughts engendered by the day's affairs. But they do not rest immediately to hand in the book-shelf by the bed. They depend on the kind of day one has had. Sterne is closer. One would rather be transported as far as possible from all the disturbances of earth's envelope of clouds, and *Tristram Shandy* is sure to be found in the sun.

But best of all books for midnight are travel books. Once I was lost every night for months with Doughty in the *Arabia Deserta*. He is a craggy author. A long course of the ordinary facile stuff, such as one gets in the Press every day, thinking it is English, sends one thoughtless and headlong among the bitter herbs and stark boulders of Doughty's burning and spacious expanse; only to get bewildered, and the shins broken, and a great fatigue at first, in a strange land of fierce sun, hunger, glittering spar, ancient plutonic rock, and very Adam himself. But once you are acclimatized, and know the language—it takes time—there is no more London after dark, till, a wanderer returned from a forgotten land, you emerge from the interior of Arabia on the Red Sea coast again, feeling as though you had lost touch with the world you used to know. And if that doesn't mean good writing I know of no other test.

Because once there was a father whose habit it was to read with his boys nightly some chapters of the Bible—and cordially they hated that habit of his—I have that Book too; though I fear I have it for no reason that he, the rigid old faithful, would be pleased to hear about. He thought of the future when he read the Bible; I read it for the past. The familiar names, the familiar rhythm of its words, its wonderful well-remembered stories of things long past—like that of Esther, one of the best in English—the eloquent anger of the prophets for the people then who looked as though they were alive, but were really dead at heart, all is solace and home to me. And now I think of it, it is our home and solace that we want in a bed-book.

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G. K. CHESTERTON

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON was born in London in 1874. He was educated at St. Paul's School and, like Hazlitt, Thackeray, and Stevenson, began by studying art. Afterward he turned his attention to journalism, and became known as one of the three cleverest young men in London—Hilaire Belloc and Max Beerbohm being the others. His daring paradoxes and the unexpected light which he casts upon familiar themes give him a distinct individuality among contemporary essayists. He has also written much verse, and some novels. His critical work, contained in the volumes on Browning, Dickens, and Victorian Literature, is of a very high order.

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ON RUNNING AFTER ONE'S HAT

I FEEL an almost savage envy on hearing that London has been flooded in my absence, while I am in the mere country. My own Battersea has been, I understand, particularly favoured as a meeting of the waters. Battersea was already, as I need hardly say, the most beautiful of human localities. Now that it has the additional splendour of great sheets of water, there must be something quite incomparable in the landscape (or waterscape) of my own romantic town. Battersea must be a vision of Venice. The boat that brought the meat from the butcher's must have shot along those lanes of rippling silver with the strange smoothness of the gondola. The greengrocer who brought cabbages to the corner of the Latchmere Road must have leant upon the oar with the unearthly grace of the gondolier. There is nothing so perfectly poetical as an island; and when a district is flooded it becomes an archipelago.

Some consider such romantic views of flood or fire slightly lacking in reality. But really this romantic view of such inconveniences is quite as practical as the other. The true optimist who sees in such things an opportunity for enjoyment is quite as logical and much more sensible than the ordinary "Indignant Ratepayer" who sees in them an opportunity for grumbling. Real pain, as in the case of being burnt at Smithfield or having a toothache, is a positive thing; it can be supported, but scarcely enjoyed. But, after all, our toothaches are the exception, and as for being burnt at Smithfield, it only happens to us at the very longest intervals. And most of the inconveniences that make men swear or women cry are really sentimental or imaginative incon-

veniences—things altogether of the mind. For instance, we often hear grown-up people complaining having to hang about a railway station and wait for a train. Did you ever hear a small boy complain of having to hang about a railway station and wait for a train? No; for to him to be inside a railway station is to be inside a cavern of wonder and a palace of poetical pleasures. Because to him the red light and the green light on the signal are like a new sun and a new moon. Because to him when the wooden arm of the signal falls down suddenly, it is as if a great king had thrown down his staff as a signal and started a shrieking tournament of trains. I myself am of little boys' habit in this matter. They also serve who only stand and wait for the two fifteen. Their meditations may be full of rich and fruitful things. Many of the most purple hours of my life have been passed at Clapham Junction, which is now, I suppose, under water. I have been there in many moods so fixed and mystical that the water might well have come up to my waist before I noticed it particularly. But in the case of all such annoyances, as I have said, everything depends upon the emotional point of view. You can safely apply the test to almost every one of the things that are currently talked of as the typical nuisance of daily life.

For instance, there is a current impression that it is unpleasant to have to run after one's hat. Why should it be unpleasant to the well-ordered and pious mind? Not merely because it is running, and running exhausts one. The same people run much faster in games and sports. The same people run much more eagerly after an uninteresting little leather ball than they will after a nice silk hat. There is an idea that it is humiliating to run after one's hat; and when people say it is humiliating they mean that it is comic. It certainly is comic; but man is a very comic creature, and most of the things he does are comic—eating, for instance. And the most comic things of all are exactly the things that are most worth doing—such as making love. A man running after a hat is not half so ridiculous as a man running after a wife.

Now a man could, if he felt rightly in the matter, run after his hat with the manliest ardour and the most sacred joy. He might regard himself as a jolly huntsman pursuing a wild animal, for certainly no animal could be wilder. In fact, I am inclined to believe that hat-hunting on windy days will be the sport of the upper classes in the future. There will be a meet of ladies and gentlemen on some high ground on a gusty morning. They will be told that the professional attendants have started a hat in such-and-such a thicket, or whatever be the technical term. Notice that this employment will in the fullest degree combine sport with humanitarianism. The hunters would feel that they were not inflicting pain. Nay, they would feel that they were inflicting pleasure, rich, almost riotous pleasure, upon the people who

were looking on. When last I saw an old gentleman running after his hat in Hyde Park, I told him that a heart so benevolent as his ought to be filled with peace and thanks at the thought of how much unaffected pleasure his every gesture and bodily attitude were at that moment giving to the crowd.

The same principle can be applied to every other typical domestic worry. A gentleman trying to get a fly out of the milk or a piece of cork out of his glass of wine often imagines himself to be irritated. Let him think for a moment of the patience of anglers sitting by dark pools, and let his soul be immediately irradiated with gratification and repose. Again, I have known some people of very modern views driven by their distress to the use of theological terms to which they attached no doctrinal significance, merely because a drawer was jammed tight and they could not pull it out. A friend of mine was particularly afflicted in this way. Every day his drawer was jammed, and every day in consequence it was something else that rhymes to it. But I pointed out to him that this sense of wrong was really subjective and relative; it rested entirely upon the assumption that the drawer could, should, and would come out easily. "But if," I said, "you picture to yourself that you are pulling against some powerful and oppressive enemy, the struggle will become merely exciting and not exasperating. Imagine that you are tugging up a lifeboat out of the sea. Imagine that you are roping up a fellow-creature out of an Alpine crevass. Imagine even that you are a boy again and engaged in a tug-of-war between French and English." Shortly after saying this I left him; but I have no doubt at all that my words bore the best possible fruit. I have no doubt that every day of his life he hangs on to the handle of that drawer with a flushed face and eyes bright with battle, uttering encouraging shouts to himself, and seeming to hear all round him the roar of an applauding ring.

So I do not think that it is altogether fanciful or incredible to suppose that even the floods in London may be accepted and enjoyed poetically. Nothing beyond inconvenience seems really to have been caused by them; and inconvenience, as I have said, is only one aspect, and that the most unimaginative and accidental aspect of a really romantic situation. An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered. The water that girdled the houses and shops of London must, if anything, have only increased their previous witchery and wonder. For as the Roman Catholic priest in the story said: "Wine is good with everything except water," and on a similar principle, water is good with everything except wine.

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EDWARD THOMAS

EDWARD THOMAS was born in 1875, educated at St. Paul's School and Oxford, and fell in action in 1917. His volumes of essays, *Rest and Unrest*, *Rose Acre Papers*, *Light and Twilight* show a descriptive power that is strong by reason of its reserve and quietness. No one was more apt at interpreting Nature in her more peaceful moods. At the very end of his life he revealed that he was a poet and showed that he could give metrical expression to the same moods and scenes which he had pictured so deftly in prose. He also wrote critical studies of the work of Richard Jefferies—a kindred spirit—Maeterlinck, Keats, Borrow, Swinburne, and others.

The following essay has been reprinted from *Light and Twilight* by permission of Messrs. Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd.

THE FLOWER-GATHERER

Herself a fairer flower.—MILTON

SO STRONG was the young beauty of the year, it might have seemed at its height were it not that each day it grew stronger. The new day excelled the one that was past, only to be outshone by the next. Day after day the sun poured out a great light and heat and joy over the earth and the delicately clouded sky. The south wind flowed in a river straight from the sun itself, and divided the fresh leaves with never-ceasing noise of amorous and joyful motion. So mighty was the sun that the miles of pale new foliage shimmered mistily like snow, yet each leaf was cool and moist with youth, and the voices of the birds creeping and fluttering among the branches were as the souls of that coolness and moistness and youth. If one moment the myriad forms of life and happiness intoxicated the delighted senses, at another a glimpse of the broad mild land stretched out below, and of the sun ruling it in the blue above, gave also a calm and a celestial dignity and simplicity to the whole. One after another the pools, the river, and rivulets, the windows or glass roofs of the vale, caught the sun and sparkling as if Vega and Gemma and Arcturus and Sirius and Aldebaran and Algol had fallen among the meadows and woods.

On some days the sense of oneness, of wide power and splendour uniting earth and sky, of infinite simplicity, triumphed. On others the spirit was content to bathe and half lose itself in numbers, exuberance, complexity, in the odours and colours and forms, one by one, in the

rich rising flood of the grass, in the hurrying to and fro of preparation that was nevertheless not overmuch troubled about the end.

The children seemed to be trying to gather all the flowers. It was their way of striving to grasp the infinite. They were scattered over the hillside, where the pale sward was made an airy or liquid substance by the innumerable cowslips nodding upon its surface, as upon a lake, that held their small shadows each quite clear. All day they gathered flowers, and threw them away, and gathered more, and still there were no less. The earth continued to murmur with blissful ease, as if, like the wandering humble-bee, it were drowsed with the warmth and the abundance.

One child separated herself from the rest, moving down instead of across or up the hill. Often she went on her knees among the flowers, with bent eyes that saw only the hundreds close at hand. But from time to time she raised her head, her delicately browned and yet more rosy face, her gleamy hair, that was as pale as barley on her temples but elsewhere golden brown as wheat, her round and calm yet lively eyes, her restless happy lips—and looked steadily for a moment at the whole of earth and sky, and grew solemn, only to return to the other pleasure of the hundred cowslips just at her feet, the crystal and emerald wings among them, the pearly snails, the daisies, and the chips of chalk like daisies. Tighter grew her hand round the swelling bunch. She slipped; the flowers fell, and not all were picked up again; and so there was yet room for bluebells when she reached the wood below. In the moister fields still lower there were kingcups of gold and cuckoo-flowers pink and white, looking as if they had fluttered down from the sky; and for these also a place had to be found. The stitchworts of a hedgeside lured and piloted her to the hollow, hardly larger than a great hall, where a brook ran straight, for once in its life.

By the slow stream forget-me-nots made a continuous haze on either bank. She was now quite alone, under the old cherry-tree of the forsaken garden at the water's edge. Six or eight huge crooked branches rising out of the rocky trunk bore up a dome that was all flowers. They were in rounded clusters as of bubbling snow, and close as honeycomb. The lovely freckled white smelt bitter and sweet at once. The flowers hummed with bees, and between the clusters were streaks and wedges of the blue. The child looked up suddenly at this glorious roof, and her smile of surprise passed into what would have been indifference, because the blossoms were inaccessible, if she had not caught sight of the forget-me-nots when the flight of a cuckoo that had been calling out of the cherry-tree carried her eyes away to where he skimmed the water. He did not fly far, nor cease to call while he was flying, or when he was seated on one of the alders by the brook. She looked at him as she was plucking the forget-me-nots. This narrow hollow was his room, she thought. Yet it was full of other songs. There were black-

birds hidden in the hazels, or clearly defined against the mayflower or the bronzed flowering oaks. Thrushes talked and called out to her a hundred times: "Did she do it? Did she do it? Did she? Did she? She did, she did!" and she laughed. A swallow flew over his image in the water as if about to dive in after it, and then rose up and curved away. Smaller unfamiliar birds sang rillets and minute cascades of hurrying song. The gold-crest repeated a tune like the unwinding of a tiny sweetly creaking winch, like the well-winch at home. But the lazy cuckoo was lord of all.

Now she had filled both hands, and each time she grasped a new stalk some of the old fell out. So presently she laid them down in the grass to rearrange them. But she now noticed the tall sedges of the brook and wanted some. She looked round to see if anyone could see her doing this forbidden thing, and then went to the edge and stretched out her hand: they were too far. The water was gliding under her, flashing like brandished steel, and yet as clear as air over the green stars of its bed. Everything had always been kind to her, and this water was one of the kindest, so playful and bright, so pure that sometimes they came far to fetch some of it in a pail for the house. She leaned out, and even moved one foot as if to step towards the green sedge. She lost her footing and fell, not quite reaching the blades as she splashed. She was scolded for getting wet, but never much, and she used to laugh as they were dressing her in fresh clothes; and to-day it was so warm . . . It was an adventure. But her hair was all wet; she did not like that: and the water, though so pure, was not pleasant in mouth, nostrils, eyes, and ears, nor could she get rid of it. Her hands touched the green stars; she could see them; but the sky was gone. She was surprised, indignant, anxious to be out. Why this cruelty? It was not a game to go on like this. She was angry . . . terrified . . . numbed. She could see nothing but water, she heard, smelt, breathed, tasted, touched water everywhere. Who could have done it? Something is cruel! . . . Why? . . . She could not bear it. No! No! Where were her flowers? Where was her mother?

She rose up a little, and saw the sun, and the cuckoo on the branch through the waves, and heard the man calling to his horses in the next field. Then solitude: all pleasure gone, love, light, warmth, movement was nothing, was over there, was past, or never had been, would never be again. It was better now. Sleep, sleep. But in the sleep, songs, visions of the house, forms and faces moving to and fro, and herself going in and out amongst them, far away, long ago, over there, in that other place. She was hurrying faster and faster, running too fast for her legs, carried away off them into the air, but swaying and rising easily and more easily now. She sighed as she seemed to float higher and lighter into soft darkness, into utter darkness, into nothing at all, where there was never anything or will be anything. The mud settled

down. The stream flowed clear and sweet. The sun had not so much to do but that he could wilt the flowers lying on the bank. Life went on exuberant, joyous, august, looking neither to the right nor to the left. The cuckoo called. The birds' songs became so drowsy that they were not missed when they ceased, and only its own echo replied to the cuckoo. The child's white forehead was just above the water, and a fly perched on it and preened his diamond wings. A quarter of a mile away the dinner-bell at home was swung merrily again and again by a strong arm that enjoyed the task.

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ROBERT LYND

ROBERT LYND was born in 1879, and has been for some years literary editor of *The Daily News*. His volumes of essays include *The Blue Lion*, *The Peal of Bells*, and *The Book of This and That*. He has also written two or three volumes of Irish impressions, and he has contributed a book on *Idling* to the series aptly entitled "These Diversions."

The following essay has been reprinted from *The Peal of Bells* by permission of Messrs. Methuen and Co., Ltd.

THE PEAL OF BELLS

"Surely I shall not spend my whole life with my own total disapprobation."—DR. JOHNSON *on his 72nd Birthday*.

IT IS a new year, and I have begun a new life. This, I think, is better than merely talking about it. But it is more difficult and brings one just as little credit. No one, indeed, seems to observe the signs of the new life except the man who is leading it. I once had a friend who told his wife that he was beginning a new life, and who went with her to a New Year's Eve party at which he thought he was being particularly abstemious, while she thought he was denying himself nothing. The next morning he complained of a headache. "Of course, you have a headache," she told him, and added: "I thought you said you were going to begin a new life." "Much good there is in beginning a new life," he retorted bitterly, "when you don't even notice it. Last night was the beginning of the new life!" He, I suppose, remembered chiefly the things he had refused at the party, while she remembered chiefly the things he had taken. There is always this personal element in our judgments of ourselves and of each other. We cannot go about, unfortunately, telling everybody about the temptations we have resisted. As a result, people judge us exclusively by the temptations to which we yield. This is very hard on those of us who

are unusually susceptible to temptation and who frequently succumb out of sheer inability to go on resisting for ever.

Knowing myself intimately, I am able to take a more sympathetic view of myself than other people can be expected to take, and I forgive myself for shortcomings that in anybody else would distress me. It is a very unhealthy frame of mind to get into to be always reproaching onself for one's peccadilloes. I am sure the most cheerful people are those who confine their censures almost entirely to the lapses of their neighbours. This is also, I hold, the more modest attitude. Like other people, I desire a better world, but I have the wit to realize that I alone can do very little to improve things, while other people could improve the globe out of recognition in seven days, if only they would conquer their evil instincts. They are the human race: I am a helpless individual, an onlooker. It would be mere conceit to regard my own faults as being half so serious in their consequences as theirs. Hence I feel an honest glow of pleasure when I see other people behaving well, and I am melancholy when I see, or even hear of, other people behaving badly. I often long to direct them with good advice, and refrain only because I know that friendship itself will not stand the strain of very much good advice for very long. And so, while I am inwardly aching to preach to my errant fellow-creatures, I find myself talking to them instead about diet, diseases, cinemas, Bernard Shaw, and the day on which I backed three winning horses at Ascot. I doubt, indeed, if I have ever warned even an intimate friend against one of his minor faults. I doubt if any of my friends know that I know their faults. In spite of the pain that our friends' faults cause us, we keep up a fantastic pretence of blindness in order that we may remain tolerable to each other. That is why we have to talk behind people's backs. There is no other chance of talking freely. Then Truth comes out of her well, smiling and without a blush. How good it is to learn the worst about our friends and acquaintances from her impartial lips! "A shrew"—"Drinks, doesn't he?"—"He's as mean as the devil"—"He and his wife quarrel in public so"—"The foulest bore in London"—"Always looks as if he had spilled soup down his waistcoat"—"Ruining himself gambling"—"He's got the most appalling swelled head"—"He's such a coward. Always runs away." These are the sort of things it is much better to say *about* a man or a woman than to their faces. There is such a thing as tact, which reminds us, for example, that, if we wish to tell the truth about a conceited man, it is better to wait until he has gone out of the room. He will not resent it then. He is so conceited that he will not even guess that we are saying how conceited he is. Some people would condemn this as scandal-mongering. But surely it is better to tell the truth behind people's backs than never to tell it at all.

Besides, if we are to abolish this form of veracity, how are we going

to preserve our moral standards? It is by listening to gossip about our friends that we learn to distinguish between right and wrong, and, as we see their reputations being torn more and more rapturously to pieces, they serve as a kind of awful warning to us, like the penitents confessing their sins at a revival meeting. And they are more fortunate than the penitents, for they do not have to confess their sins: we confess them for them. That grave, rather sad-looking little man—you would never guess what his vice was till some one told you when he had gone, that he had written an "Ode on the Intimations of Insobriety," and that his wife did not guess his secret till one night after he returned home from a party she found him folding up a bath towel and carefully putting it away in a drawer under the impression that it was his evening suit. From tales such as these we learn what sins to avoid and the importance of being careful, but not too careful. And if the sin of which we are told does not happen to be one of our own favourite sins, to join in condemning it is noble practice in moral enthusiasm. Thus, the miser is a moral enthusiast as he condemns the spendthrift, and the spendthrift as he condemns the miser. The drunkard becomes a moral enthusiast as he tells the truth about the amorist, and the amorist as he tells the truth about the sot. The hypocrite, the sluggard, the glutton, the flatterer of the people, the slum landlord, the sweating employer, the harsh mistress, the lazy workman are all capable of such moral enthusiasm; and moral enthusiasm is not a thing with which we should part lightly.

Even so, I find it more difficult, as I get older, to confine my moral enthusiasm to the lives of other people, and I grow egotistically concerned about the life I myself am leading. I should not have believed you if you had told me twenty years ago that at my present age I should not have settled into more admirable and virtuous ways. The faults of a man who had reached or passed middle age used to surprise me when I was a boy, and if I saw in him signs of vanity or fear or greed or ill-temper, I disliked them as something unnatural. It seemed to me extraordinarily easy for a middle-aged man to be virtuous, and, indeed, I could hardly imagine what middle-aged men could find to do except behave well. I saw that a number of them abstained from doing so, but in their self-indulgences they seemed to me to be as defiant of common sense as white black-birds. As I grew from boyhood to youth, I came to like many of these self-indulgent elders, but I thought of them chiefly as "rum coves," eccentrics, "old sports," and never as normal human beings who had arrived at years of discretion. When I came to read Horace in class, I learned that it was by no means easy even for a middle-aged man to be virtuous, but I nevertheless remained sure that virtue was more temptingly within reach at the age of forty than at sixteen. And I knew in my bones, though not without sorrow, that Horace was right when he affirmed that there was

a stage in life at which it was time for a man to bid good-bye to folly. As I sat under the stern eye of a master, and heard the Latin being translated into schoolboy English, I felt wave after wave of emotion sweeping over me—a wave of self-pity followed by a wave of intense resolve to play the man at some future date—at those curfew lines with which the second Epistle of the second Book of Epistles ends:

> Vivere si recte nescis, decede peritis.
> Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti;
> Tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius aequo
> Rideat et pulset lasciva decentius aetas.

Even to-day, when I can no longer read Latin, and have to guess what "*decede peritis*" means, the lines continually haunt my memory and bring back those feelings of luxurious regret with which a boy many years ago used, in anticipation, to bid farewell to Epicurus and subscribe himself a Stoic. Alas, despite all this, I find myself as I grow older approaching much more nearly to the likeness of one of those "rum coves" I used to laugh at than to the graver portrait of the Stoic I admired.

Yet somewhere in me, I feel sure, a Stoic is buried and awaiting resurrection. "Ye're a young Stoic, Master Y.; ye're a regular Trojan," my nurse used to say to me, when she gave me some base medicine in a teaspoonful of raspberry jam and I took it without wincing. I did not know at the time what the words meant, and I don't think that she knew either, but I was pleased by her flattery, which she lavished on me on all occasions of discomfort or danger. If she took me to the dentist's or put a lava-hot poultice on my chest, she always began and ended with: "Ye're a young Stoic, Master Y.; ye're a regular Trojan"; and, though it was not true, it made me feel a better and happier boy. Looking backward, I see in it an unfulfilled prophecy which I surely ought to have set about fulfilling some time ago, and I feel a better and happier man. What if now at last I should adopt the advice of Horace to himself—should listen even to the counsellor in my own breast—and should say to myself gently:

> Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti:
> Tempus abire tibi est,

and rise from the tables of pleasure and leave the sweet dishes of folly to younger mouths? There is something attractive to me in the prospect. The bare and frugal board of the Stoics has its own charm. There is no pleasure to surpass that of liberation. Philosophers aver that the chains that bind me are so fragile that they will break at a touch, and indeed that, at a mere wish, I can sever them one by one—indolence, self-indulgence, envy, fear, and folly—and escape. How delightful to achieve a godlike indifference to the things that one

knows do not really matter and that do matter to one so much! How else is it possible to become serene—which is the visible grace of wisdom? "A man," my doctor tells me, "is either a fool or a physician at forty," and it is also true, I fancy, that at that age a man is either a fool or a philosopher. O miserable choice between the rival pleasures of folly and philosophy! I have tried for a long time to combine them by enjoying the pleasures of folly in practice to-day and the pleasures of philosophy in anticipation to-morrow. Even that, however, becomes a jangling and uneasy compromise with advancing years, and I grow more and more convinced that some time or other, sooner or later—perhaps this very year—the grand break with folly must be made. In facing this fact, I feel that I have taken the first step into a new life, and, so far, the New Year seems to me to have begun excellently well. *Lusisti satis.* True. . . . Good night, folly! Good morning, virtue!

* * *

A. A. MILNE

Born in 1883, Mr. Milne was educated at Westminster and Cambridge. He was editor of *Granta* while at Cambridge and on leaving the university became a journalist in London. For nine years he was on the staff of *Punch*. He has written several successful plays, among which are *The Truth about Blayds* and *The Dover Road*, many volumes of essays, and some charming books of children's verse.

The following essay is taken from the volume entitled *Not that it Matters* by permission of Messrs. Methuen and Co., Ltd., and Messrs. E. P. Dutton and Co., who own the copyright therein.

GOLDEN FRUIT

OF THE fruits of the year I give my vote to the orange. In the first place it is a perennial—if not in actual fact, at least in the greengrocer's shop. On the days when dessert is a name given to a handful of chocolates and a little preserved ginger, when *macédoine de fruits* is the title bestowed on two prunes and a piece of rhubarb, then the orange, however sour, comes nobly to the rescue; and on those other days of plenty when cherries and strawberries and raspberries and gooseberries riot together upon the table, the orange, sweeter than ever, is still there to hold its own. Bread and butter, beef and mutton, eggs and bacon, are not more necessary to an ordered existence than the orange.

It is well that the commonest fruit should be also the best. Of the virtues of the orange I have not room fully to speak. It has properties of health-giving, as that it cures influenza and establishes the com-

plexion. It is clean, for whoever handles it on its way to your table, but handles its outer covering, its top coat, which is left in the hall. It is round, and forms an excellent substitute with the young for a cricket ball. The pips can be flicked at your enemies, and quite a small piece of peel makes a slide for an old gentleman.

But all this would count nothing had not the orange such delightful qualities of taste. I dare not let myself go upon this subject. I am a slave to its sweetness. I grudge every marriage in that it means a fresh supply of orange blossom, the promise of so much golden fruit cut short. However, the world must go on.

Next to the orange I place the cherry. The cherry is a companionable fruit. You can eat it while you are reading or talking, and you can go on and on, absent-mindedly as it were, though you must mind not to swallow the stone. The trouble of disengaging this from the fruit is just sufficient to make the fruit taste sweeter for the labour. The stalk keeps you from soiling your fingers; it enables you also to play bob cherry. Lastly it is by means of cherries that one penetrates the great mysteries of life—when and whom you will marry, and whether she really loves you or is taking you for your worldly prospects. (I may add here that I know a girl who can tie a knot in the stalk of a cherry with her tongue. It is a tricky business, and I am doubtful whether to add it to the virtues of the cherry or not.)

There are only two ways of eating strawberries. One is neat in the strawberry bed, and the other is mashed on the plate. The first method generally requires us to take up a bent position under a net—in a hot sun very uncomfortable, and at any time fatal to the hair. The second method takes us into the privacy of the home, for it demands a dressing-gown and no spectators. For these reasons I think the strawberry an overrated fruit. Yet I must say that I like to see one floating in cider cup. It gives a note of richness to the affair, and excuses any shortcomings in the lunch itself.

Raspberries are a good fruit gone wrong. A raspberry by itself might indeed be the best fruit of all; but it is almost impossible to find it alone. I do not refer to its attachment to the red currant; rather to the attachment to it of so many of our dumb little friends. The instinct of the lower creatures for the best is well shown in the case of the raspberry. If it is to be eaten it must be picked by the hand, well shaken, and then taken.

When you engage a gardener, the first thing to do is to come to an understanding with him about the peaches. The best way of settling the matter is to give him the carrots and the black currants and the rhubarb for himself, to allow him a free hand with the groundsel and the walnut trees, and to insist in return for this that you should pick the peaches when and how you like. If he is a gentleman he will consent. Supposing that some satisfactory arrangement were come to,

and supposing also that you had a silver-bladed pocket-knife with which you could peel them in the open air, then peaches would come very high in the list of fruits. But the conditions are difficult.

Gooseberries burst at the wrong end and smother you; melons—as the nigger boy discovered—make your ears sticky; currants, when you have removed the skin and extracted the seeds, are unsatisfying; blackberries have the faults of raspberries without their virtues; plums are never ripe. Yet all these fruits are excellent in their season. Their faults are faults which we can forgive during a slight acquaintance, which indeed seem but pleasant little idiosyncrasies in the stranger. But we could not live with them.

Yet with the orange we do live year in and year out. That speaks well for the orange. The fact is that there is an honesty about the orange which appeals to all of us. If it is going to be bad—for the best of us are bad sometimes—it begins to be bad from the outside, not from the inside. How many a pear which presents a blooming face to the world is rotten at the core. How many an innocent-looking apple is harbouring a worm in the bud. But the orange has no secret faults. Its outside is a mirror of its inside, and if you are quick you can tell the shopman so before he slips it into the bag.

* * *

THOMAS BURKE

THOMAS BURKE, who was born in 1887, knows his London as few men know it and he got that knowledge in the school of bitter experience. He is well known as the writer of powerful tales of Chinatown but he is also a poet and an essayist. It is interesting to note that he first made acquaintance with literature in the pages of Thomas de Quincey and that his own early experiences in London bear a marked likeness to those of which his master has told us in the *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Out and About* by permission of Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.

RENDEZVOUS

ALTHOUGH London possesses a thousand central points suitable for a street rendezvous, Londoners seem to have decided by tacit agreement to use only five of these for their outdoor appointments. They are: Charing Cross Post Office, Leicester Square Tube, Piccadilly Tube, under the Clock at Victoria, and Oxford Circus Tube; and I have never known my friends telephone me for a meeting and fix a rendezvous outside this list. Indeed, I can now, by long experi-

ence, place the habits and character of casual acquaintances who wish to meet me, from their choice among these places.

Thus, a Charing Cross Post Office appointment means a pleasure appointment. Here, at one o'clock on Saturday afternoon, wait the bright girls and golden boys, their faces, like living lamps, shining through the cloud of pedestrians as a signal for that one for whom they wait. And, though you be late in keeping the appointment, you may be certain that the waiting party will be in placid mood. There is so much to distract and delight you on this small corner. There are the bustle of the Strand and the stopping buses; the busy sweep of Trafalgar Square, so spacious that its swift stream of traffic suggests leisure; the hot smell of savouries rising from the kitchens of Morley's Hotel; and the cynical amusement to be drawn from a study of the meetings and encounters of other waiting folk. Hundreds of appointments have I kept at Charing Cross Post Office. I have met soldier-friends there, after an absence of three years. I have met cousins and sisters and aunts, and damsels who stood not in any of these relations. And I have met the Only One there, many, many times; often happily; often in trepidation; and sometimes in lyrical ecstasy, as when a quarrel and a long parting have received the benison of reconciliation. Now, I can never pass the Post Office without a tremor, for its swart, squat exterior is, for me, bowered with delicious thrills.

Never keep an appointment under the Clock at Victoria. A meeting here is fatal to the sweetness of the intercourse that is to follow. Always he or she who arrives first will be peevish or irate by the time the second party turns up; for Victoria Station, with its lowering roof, affects you with a frightful sense of being shut in and smothered. Turn how you will, sharply or gently, and you cannon with some petulant human, and, retiring apologetically from him, you impale your kidney region on some fool's walking-stick or umbrella. That fool asks you to look where you're going, and then he gets his from a truck-load of luggage. You laugh—bitterly. After three minutes of waiting in that violet-tinted beehive, you loathe your fellow-man; you loathe the entire animal kingdom. You "come over in one of them prickly 'eats." Your nerves flap about you like bits of bunting, and the new spring suit that set in such fine lines seems fit only for scaring birds. Then your friend arrives, and God help him if he's late!

I have watched these Victoria appointments many times while waiting for my train. The first party to the contract arrives, glances at the clock, and strolls to the bookstall, cheerfully swinging stick or umbrella. He strolls back to the clock, glances, compares it with his watch. Hums a bar or two. Coughs. A flicker of dismay shades his face. Then a handicapped runner for the 6.15 crashes violently against him in avoiding a platoon of soldiers, and knocks his hat over

his eyes and his stick ten yards away. When the great big world ceases turning and he finds a voice, the offender has gone. The next glance he shoots at the clock is choleric. A slight prod from an old lady who wishes to find the main booking-office produces a spout of fury; and the comedy ends with a gestic departure, in the course of which he gets a little of his own back on other of his species. His final glance at the clock is charged with the pure essence of malevolence.

How much more gracious is an appointment in the great resounding hall of Euston, though this is mainly a travellers' rendezvous and is seldom used for general appointments. Here, cloistered from the rush and roar of the station proper, yet always with a cheerful sense of loud neighbourhood, the cathedral mood is induced. You become benign, Gothic. There are pleasant straw seats. There are writing-tables with real ink. There are noble photographs of English beauty-spots, and—oh, heaps of dinky little models of railway trains and Irish Channel steamers which light up when you drop pennies in the slots. Vast, serene, and episcopal is this rendezvous—it always reminds me of the Athenæum Club; and, however protracted your vigil, it showers upon you something of its quality; so that, though your friend be twenty minutes late, you still receive him affably, and talk in conversational tones of this and of that, instead of roaring the obvious like a baseball fan, as Victoria's hall demands. You may even make subtle epigrams at Euston, and your friend will take their point. I'd like to hear some one try to convey a fine shade of meaning in Victoria.

Oxford Circus Tube I register as the meeting-ground of the suburban flapper and the suburban shopping mamma. Its note is little swinging skirts, and artful silk stockings, and shining curls, that dance to the sober music of the matrons' rustling satin. The waiting dames carry those dinky little brown-paper bags, stamped with the name of some Oxford Street draper, at whose contents the idler may amuse himself by guessing—a ribbon, a camisole, a flower-spray for a hat, gloves, or those odd lengths of cloth and linen which women will buy—though Lord knows to what esoteric use they put them. Hither come, too, those lonely people who, through the medium of "Companionship" columns or Correspondence Circles, have found a congenial soul. Why they choose Oxford Circus I don't know, but they are always to be seen there. You may recognize the type at first glance. They peer and scan closely every arrival, for, though correspondence has introduced them to the other soul, they have not yet seen the body, and they are searching for some one to fit the description that has been supplied; as thus: "I am of medium height and shall be wearing a black hat trimmed with Michaelmas daisies, and a fawn macintosh," or "I am tall, and shall be wearing a grey suit and black soft hat and spectacles, and will carry a copy of the *Buff Review* in my hand." One is pleased to speculate on the result of the meeting. Is it horrible

disillusion, or does the flint find its fellow-flint and produce the true spark? Do they thereafter look happily upon Oxford Circus Tube, or pass it with a shudder?

The crowd that hovers about the Leicester Square Tube entrance affords little matter for reflection. It is so obvious. It is so Leicester Square. It alternately snarls and leers. It never truly smiles; it is so tired of the smiling business. The loud garb of the women tells its own tale. For the rest, there are bejewelled black men, a few Australian and Belgian soldiers, and a few disgruntled and shopless actors. I never accept an appointment at Leicester Square Tube. It puts me off the lunch or dinner or whatever business is the object of the meeting. It is ignoble, squalid, with an air of sickly decency about it.

A few yards further Westward, at Piccadilly Tube, the atmosphere changes. One tastes the ampler ether and diviner air. It does not, like Charing Cross Post Office, sing April and May, but rather the mellowness of August and September. Good solid people meet here; people "comfortably off," as the phrase goes; people who have lived largely, but have not lost their capacity for deliberate enjoyment. At meal-times they gather thickly; quiet, dainty women; obese majors; Government officials; and that nondescript type that wears shabby, well-cut clothes with an air of prosperity and breeding. You may almost name the first words that will be spoken when a couple meet: "Well, where shall we go? Trocadero, Criterion—or Soho?" There is little hilarity; people don't "let themselves go" at this rendezvous. They are out for entertainment, but it is mild, well-ordered entertainment. The note of the crowd is, "If a thing is worth doing at all, it's worth doing well," even if the thing is only a hurried lunch or a curfew-rationed theatre.

Classifying London's meeting-places by their moral atmospheres, I would mark Charing Cross Post Office as juvenile; Oxford Circus Tube as youth; Leicester Square Tube as senility; Piccadilly Tube as middle-age; the Great Hall at Euston as reverend seniority; and Victoria Station—well, Victoria Station should get a total-rejection certificate.

* * *

PHILIP GUEDALLA

MR. PHILIP GUEDALLA was born in 1889. He was educated at Rugby and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he distinguished himself in modern history and showed the promise which he is now so busily and ably fulfilling. His historical works include *The Partition of Europe, 1715-1815*; *Supers and Supermen*; *The Second Empire*; *Masters and Men*; *A Gallery*; and *Palmerston*.

The following essay is taken from Mr. Guedalla's volume in the *Essays of To-day and Yesterday* series and is reprinted here with the author's permission.

THOUGHTS IN SANCTUARY

THE collective efforts of the Prime Minister, Mr. Jacob Epstein, and Mr. Cunninghame Graham, supported (as dramatic critics say) by an influential and representative committee, has released the Silly Season eight weeks or so before its time. One is prepared for this kind of thing in August, when tactful editors replace the more disturbing forms of news with a really sedative controversy. "Should Girls . . . ?" "Do Bishops . . . ?" "Can a Dean . . . ?" These eager questions waft us to the seashore. One can almost catch the languid flop of summer waves. The sand is in our shoes; the unyielding shingle conforms inadequately to our shoulder-blades; the air is cheerful with the cries of children coming up for the second time.

But here it comes in May, one symptom more of the senseless craving of our age for hurry. "Mother of Nine" inquires from Walham Green what art is coming to. "R.A.," in sterner tones, tells her where it has gone, and obligingly appends a list of his principal works. Jocose reporters crouch behind trees to record the conversations of startled nursemaids. A Park policeman is prevailed upon to vouchsafe his impressions to a wider public; while several architects of that restless type which aches perpetually to perform Olympic feats of town-planning by throwing Charing Cross Station across the river find glorious pretexts in this innocuous health-resort for sparrows.

Yet how few, in the sudden uproar, have alighted on the real point for congratulation. It leaps to the eye, though Mr. Baldwin was restrained by tact from alluding to it at the unveiling. For one observes with glee that there is hardly any sculpture. There might, of course, be less. But it is only just to remember that there might equally be more.

When first one heard obscurely that a distinguished writer was to be commemorated, one winced and thought of marble trousers. Military men protect themselves against this posthumous form of ridicule by adopting a style of leg-wear that defies the worst excesses of the sculptor. Spurs and riding-boots are not ignoble; they seem to retain their shape, even in studios. But plastic tailoring is pitiless with civilians. Disdaining braces, they sag precariously in crowded streets; although the most perilous cases have sought refuge in the Central Lobby of the House of Commons. But when forced into the open, they seemed to adopt the oddest disguises. George Canning emerges perpetually from his eternal Turkish bath, though next to him the

quaintly trousered form of Lincoln exhibits to the full the sartorial recklessness of a New World. Fearing the sculptured trouser, Disraeli shrouds himself in a peer's robes; and just across the way Lord Palmerston extends a railway rug at posterity in a perpetual, mute request to wrap him up. Some, indeed, prefer to end below the shoulders in a square pedestal and a symbolical lady; and far down the Embankment Sir Joseph Bazalgette, warned by the fate of Brunel, conceals himself in one of his largest drain-pipes and lies full length to watch the trams go by.

That fate, which overhung the memory of Hudson, has been averted. He does not stoop, life-size, to press a bronze flower between the adamantine leaves of a bronze book or sit perpetually, pen in hand, groping through all eternity for the right word. He even escaped the milder torment, to which our sentence on the dead is often commuted, of staring in profile on a medallion like an eternal parody of a half-crown. One feels that, on the whole, we have been merciful with Hudson. His spirit, as it were, let off with a caution. Other offenders may be dealt with more severely, like Burns, who got the maximum penalty—for writing in dialect, no doubt. But the Prime Minister or Mr. Epstein or Mr. Cunninghame Graham has been almost compassionate with Hudson.

Not that the risks would have been smaller in any foreign capital. Discussion of our monuments invariably provokes an ill-timed burst of national humility. But monuments are just as funny abroad. In Germany, of course, the dead writer would have been popped into some huge Valhalla, with a warning by Baedeker (*Adm.* 10-5. *Guardian* 1 *Mk.*) against visiting it without wraps after sundown. He might even, had he worn spectacles in life, have retained them, like Herr Friedrich Krupp in his eternity of myopia outside the Yacht Club at Kiel. One might suppose that men of letters die happier in France. But they can foresee, if they know their Paris, a dismal prolongation of their existence in a frock-coat of lambent marble on an uncomfortable marble seat. Perhaps they will droop a little, and a merciful rug spread on the failing legs may spare them the worst. But a large, sorrowing lady will trail along the ground, slightly immodest but extremely allegorical; whilst the cruel marble restrains through all eternity the writer's chivalrous impulse to lend her his rug.

But there is a graver feature. A gifted writer upon nature dies; and we enclose a small slice of nature in his honour. Is it, one asks a little nervously, to be a precedent? We have commemorated Hudson's prose with a railing round a fragment of Hyde Park. Are we to honour Conrad's with a railing (rustless) round a small segment of the Serpentine? One can almost see the scene—a respectful company in boats, whilst kindly hands on shore air blankets at the Royal Humane Society's. The voices come faintly across the water, as the

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries dedicates this charming fish sanctuary to the memory of an aquatic writer, upon whom his private secretary has furnished him with the relevant facts. And then a mild controversy in the Press as to the suitability of some one's colossal nude of Venus rising from the Serpentine.

Soon the whole Park will bristle with names and dates. Lovers will meet by George Meredith (squirrels) or at Cunninghame Graham (the large horse sanctuary near Hyde Park Corner); and the Park, the old, uninforming, incommemorative Park, will be a faded memory of vulgar grass and trees, wholly devoid of literary associations.

Have we not reached a point at which the public foot might be, quite reverently but quite firmly, put down? We have preserved the Park for people, not for statues. Field-Marshals ramp outside. Prime Ministers who know their place remain at Westminster. And if our men of letters insist upon admission, let us concede to them one simple stone inscribed "To the Unknown Writer." From what I know of literary men, there will be little competition.

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J. B. S. HALDANE

Mr. John Burdon Sanderson Haldane was born in 1892. He is the son of J. S. Haldane, F.R.S., the well known physiologist. He was a scholar of New College, Oxford, and served as an officer in the Black Watch from 1914 to 1918, being twice wounded. From 1919 to 1922 he was Fellow of New College, Oxford, and in 1923 he became Reader in Biochemistry at Cambridge University. In 1927 he was appointed Head of the Genetical Department of the John Innes Horticultural Institution. His published work comprises about thirty papers on biological subjects as well as works dealing with various aspects of modern science. Among these are *Callinicus, a Defence of Chemical Warfare*; *Daedalus*, or *Science and the Future*; *Possible Worlds and Other Essays*; and (with J. S. Huxley) *Animal Biology*.

The following essay is taken from *Possible Worlds and Other Essays* (Chatto and Windus) by permission of the author.

ON BEING THE RIGHT SIZE

THE most obvious differences between different animals are differences of size, but for some reason the zoologists have paid singularly little attention to them. In a large textbook of zoology before me I find no indication that the eagle is larger than the sparrow, or the hippopotamus bigger than the hare, though some grudging admissions are made in the case of the mouse and the whale. But yet it is easy to

show that a hare could not be as large as a hippopotamus, or a whale as small as a herring. For every type of animal there is a most convenient size, and a large change in size inevitably carries with it a change of form.

Let us take the most obvious of possible cases, and consider a giant man sixty feet high—about the height of Giant Pope and Giant Pagan in the illustrated *Pilgrim's Progress* of my childhood. These monsters were not only ten times as high as Christian, but ten times as wide and ten times as thick, so that their total weight was a thousand times his, or about eighty to ninety tons. Unfortunately, the cross-sections of their bones were only a hundred times those of Christian, so that every square inch of giant bone had to support ten times the weight borne by a square inch of human bone. As the human thighbone breaks under about ten times the human weight, Pope and Pagan would have broken their thighs every time they took a step. This was doubtless why they were sitting down in the picture I remember. But it lessens one's respect for Christian and for Jack the Giant Killer.

To turn to zoology, suppose that a gazelle, a graceful little creature with long thin legs, is to become large—it will break its bones unless it does one of two things. It may make its legs short and thick, like the rhinoceros, so that every pound of weight has still about the same area of bone to support it. Or it can compress its body and stretch out its legs obliquely to gain stability like the giraffe. I mention these two beasts because they happen to belong to the same order as the gazelle, and both are quite successful mechanically, being remarkably fast runners.

Gravity, a mere nuisance to Christian, was a terror to Pope, Pagan, and Despair. To the mouse and any smaller animal it presents practically no dangers. You can drop a mouse down a thousand yard mine shaft and, on arriving at the bottom, it gets a slight shock and walks away. A rat is killed, a man is broken, a horse splashes. For the resistance presented to movement by the air is proportional to the surface of the moving object. Divide an animal's length, breadth, and height each by ten; its weight is reduced to a thousandth, but its surface only to a hundredth. So the resistance to falling in the case of the small animal is relatively ten times the driving force.

An insect, therefore, is not afraid of gravity; it can fall without danger, and can cling to the ceiling with remarkably little trouble. It can go in for elegant fantastic forms of support like that of the daddy-long-legs. But there is a force which is as formidable to an insect as gravitation to a mammal. This is surface tension. A man coming out of a bath carries with him a film of water of about one-fiftieth of an inch in thickness. This weighs about a pound. A wet mouse has to carry about its own weight of water. A wet fly has to lift many times its own weight and, as every one knows, a fly once

wetted by water or any other liquid is in a very serious position indeed. An insect going for a drink is in as great danger as a man leaning out over a precipice in search of food. If it once falls into the grip of the surface tension of the water—that is to say, gets wet—it is likely to remain so until it drowns. A few insects, such as water-beetles, contrive to be unwettable; the majority keep well away from their drink by means of a long proboscis.

Of course tall land animals have other difficulties. They have to pump their blood to greater heights than a man and, therefore, require a larger blood pressure and tougher blood vessels. A great many men die from burst arteries, especially in the brain, and this danger is presumably still greater for an elephant or a giraffe. But animals of all kinds find difficulties in size for the following reason: A typical small animal, say a microscopic worm or rotifer, has a smooth skin through which all the oxygen it requires can soak in, a straight gut with sufficient surface to absorb its food, and a simple kidney. Increase its dimensions tenfold in every direction, and its weight is increased a thousand times so, that if it is to use its muscles as efficiently as its miniature counterpart, it will need a thousand times as much food and oxygen per day and will excrete a thousand times as much of waste products.

Now, if its shape is unaltered its surface will be increased only a hundred-fold, and ten times as much oxygen must enter per minute through each square millimetre of skin, ten times as much food through each square millimetre of intestine. When a limit is reached to their absorptive powers their surface has to be increased by some special device. For example, a part of the skin may be drawn out into tufts to make gills, or pushed in to make lungs, thus increasing the oxygen-absorbing surface in proportion to the animal's bulk. A man, for example, has a hundred square yards of lung. Similarly the gut, instead of being smooth and straight, becomes coiled and develops a velvety surface, and other organs increase in complication. The higher animals are not larger than the lower because they are more complicated. They are more complicated because they are larger. Just the same is true of plants. The simplest plants such as the green algæ growing in stagnant water or on the bark of trees are mere round cells. The higher plants increase their surface by putting out leaves and roots. Comparative anatomy is largely the story of the struggle to increase surface in proportion to volume.

Some of the methods of increasing the surface are useful up to a point but not capable of a very wide adaptation. For example, while vertebrates carry the oxygen from the gills or lungs all over the body in the blood, insects take air directly to every part of their body by tiny blind tubes called tracheæ which open to the surface at many different points. Now, although by their breathing movements they

can renew the air in the outer part of the tracheal system, the oxygen has to penetrate the finer branches by means of diffusion. Gases can diffuse easily through very small distances, not many times larger than the average length travelled by a gas molecule between collisions with other molecules. But when such vast journeys—from the point of view of a molecule—as a quarter of an inch have to be made, the process becomes slow. So the portions of an insect's body more than a quarter of an inch from the air would always be short of oxygen. In consequence hardly any insects are much more than half an inch thick. Land crabs are built on the same general plan as insects, but are much clumsier. Yet, like ourselves, they carry round oxygen in their blood, and are therefore able to grow far larger than any insect. If the insects had hit on a plan for driving air through their tissues instead of letting it soak in, they might well have become as large as lobsters, though other considerations would have prevented them from becoming as large as man.

Exactly the same difficulties attach to flying. It is an elementary principle of aeronautics that the minimum speed needed to keep an aeroplane of given shape in the air varies as the square root of its length. If it is four times as big each way it must fly twice as fast. Now the power needed for the minimum speed increases more rapidly than the weight of the machine. Of the two aeroplanes considered above, the larger weighs sixty-four times as much as the smaller but needs one hundred and twenty-eight times its horsepower to keep up. Applying the same principles to the birds, we find that the limit to their size is soon reached. An angel whose muscles developed no more power weight for weight than those of an eagle or a pigeon would require a breast projecting for about four feet to house the muscles engaged in working its wings, while to economize in weight, its legs would have to be reduced to mere stilts. Actually a large bird such as an eagle or kite does not keep in the air mainly by moving its wings. It is generally to be seen soaring, that is to say balanced on a rising column of air. But even soaring becomes more and more difficult with increasing size. Were this not the case eagles might be as large as tigers and as formidable to man as hostile aeroplanes.

II

But it is time that we passed to some of the advantages of size. One of the most obvious is that it enables one to keep warm. All warm-blooded animals at rest lose the same amount of heat from a unit area of skin, for which purpose they need a food-supply proportional to their surface and not to their weight. Five thousand mice weigh as much as a man. Their surface and food, or oxygen consumption, are about seventeen times a man's. In fact a mouse eats

about one-quarter its own weight of food every day, which is mainly used in keeping it warm. For the same reason small animals cannot live in wild countries. In the arctic regions there are no reptiles or amphibians, and no small mammals. The smallest mammal in Spitzbergen is the fox. The small birds fly away in the winter, while the insects die, though their eggs can survive six months or more of frost. The most successful mammals are bears, seals, and walruses.

Similarly, the eye is a rather inefficient organ until it reaches a large size. The back of the human eye on which an image of the outside world is thrown and which corresponds to the film of a camera, is composed of a mosaic of "rods and cones" whose diameter is little more than the length of an average light wave. Each eye has about half a million, and for two objects to be distinguishable their images must fall on separate rods or cones. It is obvious that with fewer but larger rods and cones we should see less distinctly. If they were twice as broad, two points would have to be twice as far apart before we could distinguish them at a given distance. But if their size were diminished and their number increased we should see no better. For it is impossible to form a definite image smaller than a wave-length of light. Hence a mouse's eye is not a small-scale model of a human eye. Its rods and cones are not much smaller than ours, and therefore there are fewer of them. A mouse could not distinguish one human face from another six feet away. In order that they should be of any use at all, the eyes of small animals have to be much larger in proportion to their bodies than our own. Large animals on the other hand require only relatively small eyes, and those of the whale and elephant are little larger than our own.

For rather more recondite reasons the same general principle holds true of the brain. If we compare the brain-weights of a set of very similar animals such as the cat, cheetah, leopard, and tiger, we find that as we quadruple the body-weight the brain-weight is only doubled. The larger animal with proportionately larger bones can economize on brain, eyes, and certain other organs.

III

Such are a very few of the considerations which show that for every type of animal there is an optimum size. Yet although Galileo demonstrated the contrary more than three hundred years ago, people still believe that if a flea were as large as a man it could jump a thousand feet into the air. As a matter of fact the height to which an animal can jump is more nearly independent of its size than proportional to it. A flea can jump about two feet, a man about seven. To jump a given height, if we neglect the resistance of the air, requires an expenditure of energy proportional to the jumper's weight. But if the jumping

muscles form a constant fraction of the animal's body, the energy developed per ounce of muscle is independent of the size, provided it can be developed quickly enough in the small animal. As a matter of fact an insect's muscles, although they can contract more quickly than our own, appear to be less efficient, as otherwise a flea or grasshopper could rise six feet into the air.

And just as there is a best size for every animal, so the same is true for every human institution. In the Greek type of democracy all the citizens could listen to a series of orators and vote directly on questions of legislation. Hence their philosophers held that a small city was the largest possible democratic state. The English invention of representative government made a democratic nation possible and the possibility was first realized in the United States, and later elsewhere. With the development of broadcasting it has once more become possible for every citizen to listen to the political views of representative orators, and the future may perhaps see the return of the national state to the Greek form of democracy. Even the referendum has been made possible only by the institution of daily newspapers.

To the biologists the problem of socialism appears largely as a problem of size. The socialists desire to run every nation as a single business concern. I do not suppose that Henry Ford would find much difficulty in running Andorra or Luxembourg on a socialistic basis. He has already more men on his pay-roll than their population. It is conceivable that a syndicate of Fords, if we could find them, would make Belgium Ltd. or Denmark Inc. pay their way. But while nationalization of certain industries is an obvious possibility in the largest of states, I find it no easier to picture a completely socialized British Empire or United States than an elephant turning somersaults or a hippopotamus jumping a hedge.

* * *

FRANCE

Introductory Note

IT IS to France that we owe the word "essay," and if we deny to France the honour of possessing in Montaigne the originator of the form itself, we are not to be understood as belittling in any way the sum of her achievement in it. It is true that the essay in French has taken a rather more serious turn than that which we are accustomed to look for in the English essay. The French writer seldom lets himself go. He does not care to be caught at play. He never forgets that he is a serious, rational being, and he is always conscious of his destiny. You will occasionally meet a charming study like Daudet's "Sparrow Island," but such essays are comparatively rare and remain as exceptions which prove the rule. Yet it would be wrong to assume, as some have done, that the essay is rare in French literature. It is there—with a difference. Henley very happily termed the essay "conversational literature," and as the French have always excelled in the conversational art it would be strange indeed if they were not correspondingly proficient in the literary form in which conversation is crystallized. And, indeed, in the writing of *pensées* and maxims—the raw material of the essay proper—the French have never been equalled. Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, Vauvenargues, and Joubert are in this matter without peers. And if the later essayists have rarely achieved the whimsical intimacy of Charles Lamb, but have chosen a sobriety of criticism and a subtlety of analysis which he could not attempt there is no matter in that for the drawing of invidious distinctions. The reader will rather take interest in noting what different results will spring from similar seed planted in different ground and will not grudge the French essay the credit which it certainly has earned.

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MONTAIGNE

MICHEL EYQUEM, Seigneur de Montaigne, was born in the Château of Montaigne, in Périgord, in 1533. After more than six years of thorough classical training, he took up the study of law. He found this little to his liking, however, and, at a convenient moment, withdrew from public life to the seclusion of his castle. There in the tower he arranged his books and in their margins jotted down the comments and musings which were later to be developed into the famous

essays. As Seigneur de Montaigne offices and honours were thrust upon him, but he cared for none of these things, being never so happy as when spending his days in "a kind of busy idleness" in his library. The essays are the result. They bear the marks of his reading: Seneca and Plutarch were especial favourites. They bear still more strongly the marks of his own personality and his hatred of dogmatism. It is impossible to measure with any precision the influence Montaigne has had upon literature since his day. He died in 1592.

The following essay is taken from the translation by John Florio.

OF THE USE OF APPAREL

WHATSOEVER I aim at, I must needs force some of custom's contradictions, so carefully hath she barred all our entrances. I was devising in this chill-cold season whether the fashion of these late discovered nations to go naked be a custom forced by the hot temperature of the air, as we say of the Indians and Moors, or whether it be an original manner of mankind. Men of understanding, forasmuch as whatsoever is contained under heaven (as saith the Holy Writ) is subject to the same laws, are wont in such like considerations, where natural laws are to be distinguished from those invented by man, to have recourse to the general policy of the world, where nothing that is counterfeit can be admitted. Now, all things being exactly furnished else-whence with all necessaries to maintain this being, it is not to be imagined that we alone should be produced in a defective and indigent estate, yes, and in such a one as cannot be maintained without foreign help. My opinion is, that even as all plants, trees, living creatures, and whatsoever hath life, is naturally seen furnished with sufficient furniture to defend itself from the injury of all weathers:

Proptereáque ferè res omnes, aut corio sunt,
Aut setâ, aut conchis, aut callo, aut cortice tectae.

Therefore all things almost we cover'd mark,
With hide, or hair, or shells, or brawn, or bark.

Even so were we. But as those who by an artificial light extinguish the brightness of the day, we have quenched our proper means by such as we have borrowed. And we may easily discern that only custom makes that seem impossible unto us which is not so: For of those nations that have no knowledge of clothes, some are found situated under the same heaven, and climate or parallel, that we are in, and more cold and sharper than ours. Moreover, the tenderest parts of us are ever bare and naked, as our eyes, face, mouth, nose, and ears; and our country swains (as our forefathers wont) most of them at this day go bare-breasted down to the navel. Had we

been born needing petticoats and breeches, there is no doubt but Nature would have armed that which she hath left to the batteries of seasons and fury of weathers with some thicker skin or hide, as she hath done our finger ends and the soles of our feet. Why seems this hard to be believed? Between my fashion of apparel and that of one of my country-clowns, I find much more difference between him and me than between his fashion and that of a man who is clothed but with his bare skin. "How many men (especially in Turkey) go ever naked for devotion's sake?" a certain man demanded of one of our loitering rogues whom in the deep of frosty Winter he saw wandering up and down with nothing but his shirt about him, and yet as blithe and lusty as another that keeps himself muffled and wrapped in warm furs up to the ears; how he could have patience to go so. "And have not you, good Sir" (answered he) "your face all bare? Imagine I am all face." The Italians report (as far as I remember) of the Duke of Florence his fool, who when his Lord asked him how, being so ill-clad, he could endure the cold, which he hardly was able to do himself; to whom the fool replied: "Master, use but my receipt, and put all the clothes you have upon you, as I do all mine; you shall feel no more cold than I do." King Massinissa, even in his eldest days, were it never so cold, so frosty, so stormy, or sharp weather, could never be induced to put something on his head, but went always bareheaded. The like is reported of the Emperor Severus. In the battles that passed between the Egyptians and the Persians, Herodotus saith, that both himself and divers others took special notice that of such as lay slain on the ground the Egyptian skulls were without comparison much harder than the Persians; by reason that these go ever with their heads covered with coifs and turbans, and those from their infancy ever shaven and bareheaded. And King Agesilaus, even in his decrepit age, was ever wont to wear his clothes both Winter and Summer alike. Suetonius affirms that Caesar did ever march foremost before his troops, and most commonly bare-headed, and on foot, whether the sun shone or it rained. The like is reported of Hannibal.

tum vertice nudo,
Excipere insanos imbres, caelique ruinam.

Bare-headed then he did endure,
Heav'n's ruin and mad-raging shower.

A Venetian that hath long dwelt amongst them, and who is but lately returned thence, writeth, that in the Kingdom of Pegu, both men and women, having all other parts clad, go ever bare-footed, yes, and on horse-back also. And Plato for the better health and preservation of the body doth earnestly persuade that no man should ever give the feet and the head other cover than Nature hath allotted them. He whom the Polonians choose for their King, next to ours who may

worthily be esteemed one of the greatest Princes of our age, doth never wear gloves, nor what weather soever it be, winter or summer, other bonnet abroad then in the warm house. As I cannot endure to go unbuttoned or untrussed, so the husbandmen neighbouring about me would be and feel themselves as fettered or hand-bound with going so. Varro is of opinion, that when we were appointed to stand bare-headed before the gods or in presence of the Magistrates, it was rather done for our health, and to enure and arm us against injuries of the weather, than in respect of reverence. And since we are speaking of cold, and are Frenchmen, accustomed so strangely to array ourselves in parti-coloured suits (not I, because I seldom wear any other than black or white, in imitation of my father), let us add this one thing more, which Captain Martyn du Bellay relateth in the voyage of Luxemburg, where he saith to have seen so hard frosts, that their munition-wines were fain to be cut and broken with hatchets and wedges, and shared unto the soldiers by weight, which they carried away in baskets; and Ovid,

Nudaque consistunt formam servantia testae
Vina, nec hausta meri sed data frusta bibunt.

Bare wines, still keeping form of cask, stand fast,
Not gulps, but gobbets of their wine they taste.

The frosts are so hard and sharp in the embogging of the Meotis fens, that in the very place where Mithridates' Lieutenant had delivered a battle to his enemies, on hard ground and dry-footed, and there defeated them, the next summer he there obtained another sea-battle against them. The Romans suffered a great disadvantage in the fight they had with the Carthaginians near unto Placentia, for so much as they went to their charge with their blood congealed and limbs benumbed, through extreme cold: whereas Hannibal had caused many fires to be made throughout his camp, to warm his soldiers by, and a quantity of oil to be distributed amongst them, that therewith anointing themselves, they might make their sinews more supple and nimble, and harden their pores against the bitter blasts of cold wind which then blew, and nipping piercing of the air. The Grecians' retreat from Babylon into their country is renowned by reason of the many difficulties and encumbrances they encountered withal, and were to surmount; whereof this was one, that in the mountains of Armenia, being surprised and encircled with so horrible and great quantity of snow, that they lost both the knowledge of the country and the ways: wherewith they were so straitly beset that they continued a day and a night without eating or drinking; and most of their horses and cattle died: of their men a great number also deceased; many with the glittering and whiteness of the snow were stricken blind; divers through the extremity were lamed, and their limbs shrunken up; many stark stiff

and frozen with cold, although their senses were yet whole. Alexander saw a nation where in winter they bury their fruit-bearing trees under the ground, to defend them from the frost: a thing also used amongst some of our neighbours. Touching the subject of apparel, the King of Mexico was wont to change and shift his clothes four times a day, and never wore them again, employing his leavings and cast-suits for his continual liberalities and rewards; as also neither pot nor dish, nor any implement of his kitchen or table were twice brought before him.

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LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

François, Duc de la Rochefoucauld, was born in Paris in 1613. As a young man he plotted against Richelieu, and was active in the Fronde. Later he was wounded and, for a time, lost his sight. This led him to withdraw from public life. Finally he settled in Paris, frequenting the great *salons* there. In his *Maximes et Réflexions Morales* he expresses, very pithily, the ideas of a thoroughly disillusioned man. He finds self-love to be the mainspring of all our actions. Whatever may be thought of La Rochefoucauld's analysis of life, his style is beyond reproach. As a master of terse expression he has never been surpassed, in his own country or elsewhere. He died in 1680.

The following extracts are taken from a translation of the *Maxims* by L. D., published in 1775.

FRIENDSHIP

WHAT is commonly called friendship is no more than a partnership; a reciprocal regard for another's interests, and an exchange of good offices: in a word, a mere traffic, wherein self-love always proposes to be a gainer.

Though most of the friendships of the world ill deserve the name of friendship, yet a man may make use of them occasionally, as of a traffic whose returns are uncertain, and in which it is usual to be cheated.

In the distress of our best friends we always find something that does not displease us.

The reason why we are so changeable in our friendship is, that it is as difficult to know the qualities of the heart, as it is easy to know those of the head.

We love everything on our own account: we even follow our own taste and inclination when we prefer our friends to ourselves; and yet it is this preference alone that constitutes true and perfect friendship.

It is more dishonourable to distrust a friend, than to be deceived by him.

We often imagine that we love men in power; but it is all interest at bottom; we espouse not their party to do them any service, but to make them of service to ourselves.

We sometimes lightly complain of our friends, to be beforehand in justifying our own levity.

We are not very much afflicted for our friends, when their misfortunes give us an opportunity of signalizing our affection for them.

We are fond of exaggerating the love our friends bear us; but it is less from a principle of gratitude, than from a desire of prejudicing people in favour of our own merit.

We love those who admire *us*, but not those whom *we* admire.

Rare as true love is, it is less so than true friendship.

The reason why few women give in to friendship is, that to those who have experienced love, friendship is insipid.

In friendship, as in love, we are often happier in our ignorance than our knowledge.

It is equally difficult to have a friendship for those whom we do not esteem, as for those whom we esteem more than we do ourselves.

The greatest effort of friendship is, not the discovery of our faults to our friend, but an endeavour to convince him of his own.

The charm of novelty, and that of long habit, opposite as they are, equally conceal from us the faults of our friends.

The generality of friends put us out of conceit with friendship; just as the generality of religious people put us out of conceit with religion.

Renewed friendships require a nicer conduct than those that have never been broken.

* * *

BLAISE PASCAL

Blaise Pascal was born in 1623 and is now remembered for two outstanding books—*Lettres Provinciales* and *Pensées*. The first was written in defence of his friend Arnauld who had been condemned for heretical opinions. The quarrels between Jesuits and Jansenists have very little interest for most people at this time of day, yet the letters remain great literature in spite of their subject-matter. For lucidity and force they are unsurpassed and their significance remains unabated. The *Pensées* consist of a mass of notes which Pascal had accumulated with the idea of writing an apologia for Christianity. They were left without order or method and succeeding editors have not been wholly successful in their endeavours to effect some sort of arrangement of the perplexing material. Pascal died in 1662.

The following passage from the *Pensées* has been specially translated for this volume by Miss Dorothy Margaret Stuart.

OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE IN GENERAL

WHEN a man looks at himself, the first thing that he sees is his own body—that is to say, a small portion of matter peculiar to him. But in order to understand exactly what his body is, he must measure it against everything above it and everything below, and so determine its limits.

Let him not stop short at the things that surround him; let him contemplate all Nature, in her august and unmitigated splendour: let him consider that blazing light, hung like an everlasting lamp to illuminate the universe; let him imagine this earth as a mere speck compared with the vast orbit of the greater star; and let him marvel as he realizes that even this vast orbit is only a fine point compared with those followed by the farther stars of the firmament. If our sight end there, let our thought pass beyond. It will be weary of apprehending before Nature is weary of producing subjects for its apprehension. All that we can see of the world is but an imperceptible element in the ample heart of Nature. No idea can approach the extent of these spaces. However much we expand our conceptions, we bring forth atoms only, at the expense of reality. There is an infinite sphere, of which the centre is everywhere, the circumference nowhere. In short, it is one of the most manifest instances of the omnipotence of God that our imagination should lose itself in this thought.

Now let man, returning to himself, consider what he is in comparison with the things that are: let him think of himself as astray in this little, forgotten province of Nature; and, from what he can see of this small cell, his lodging, that is to say, from the visible world, let him learn to value the earth, and the kingdoms and the cities thereof, and himself, at their true worth.

What is man in the infinite? Who can conceive it? Yet, that he may have before him another and a not less amazing marvel, let him direct his thoughts to the most diminutive of things. Let a cheese-mite, in its tiny body, show him members incomparably more small, legs with joints, legs with veins, blood in those veins, humours in that blood, drops in those humours, vapours in those drops: then let him exhaust his faculties of apprehension, dividing these last divisions yet again, and let his ultimate conception of littleness be the theme of our discourse. He will imagine perhaps that here is the vanishing point of nature; but I would show him a new gulf there. I would paint for him not only the visible universe, but everything that he can conceive of the vastness of creation, within the compass of that imperceptible atom. There let him see innumerable worlds, whereof each one hath its firmament, its planets, its globe, in the same proportions as those of the perceptible world: and on that globe, animals, yea, even unto cheese-mites, wherein he shall find all the attributes of the first, and find these again in others, without rest and without end. Let him lose himself in these marvels, as overwhelming by reason of their littleness as were the first by reason of their vast extent. For who would not be wonder-struck that our body, just now an imperceptible speck in immensity, should thus become a colossus, a world, a whole cosmos, compared with the last unattainable littleness of created things!

He who reflects after this fashion may, peradventure, tremble to see himself, as it were, swinging mid-way, between these two gulfs, upon the point which nature has vouchsafed to him, the infinitely great and the infinitely small, to neither of which he belongs. He will quail before these marvels; and methinks that as his curiosity changes to wonder, he will incline rather to contemplate these things in silence than to explore them with temerity.

For, after all, what is man in Nature? An atom by contrast with the infinitely great, a cosmos by contrast with the infinitely small. He is very far from contact with either extreme, and his being is not more alien to nothingness, whence it was drawn, than it is to eternity, whither it is bound.

In the order of intellectual things, his brain holds the same place as does his body in the natural order: all that it can achieve is a vague apprehension of the centre, without any hope of ever knowing either the source or the sum. Everything comes from nothing and is borne

towards infinity. Who is there that could follow these amazing successions? The first Author of these marvels understands them; and none other.

This state, mid-way between two extremes, exists in all our powers. Our senses record nothing in excess. Too much clamour will deafen us; too much light will make us blind; from too near or too far a point, we cannot see aright; too much brevity and too much length both tend to make a speech obscure; too much delight is wearisome; too many alliterations will pall. We are sensible neither of extreme heat nor of extreme cold. All extremes are inimical to us, and beyond the range of our sensations. We do not feel, we *suffer* them. By youth and by age the mind is impeded, as it is also by dearth and by excess of food; too much instruction stupefies—and so does too little. Extremes, as it were, do not exist for us, nor we for them. Either we elude them, or they, us.

This is our true condition. This it is that contracts our knowledge within certain limits which we do not transcend, being, as we are, incapable of knowing either everything or nothing. We exist upon a vast centre, constantly oscillating between ignorance and knowledge. If we try to go farther, our objective quivers and dissolves, and evades our grasp; it escapes, and flies from us in an unending flight, and by nothing may it be stayed. This is our natural condition, and also a condition most contrary to our inclination. We are aflame with desire to pierce all things, we would fain build a tower reaching up into infinity. But our building cracks asunder, and the earth opens, even unto the most profound abyss.

I can quite well imagine a man without arms or legs; I could even imagine him without a head, if experience had not taught me that it is with the aid of his head that he thinks. It is, therefore, in thought that man's being consists, and lacking which we cannot imagine him. What is it in us that is conscious of pleasure? Is it the hand? is it the arm? is it the flesh or the blood? Obviously it must be something non-material.

So great is man, the very fact that he is conscious of his misery stands forth as an additional proof of his greatness. A tree is not conscious of misery. It is true, however, that to know oneself unhappy is in itself unhappiness. Yet to know oneself miserable is in itself greatness. Thus, all the woes of man do but prove him to be great; they are the woes of a prince, the woes of a discrowned king.

Who would grieve at not being a king, unless a king discrowned. Did Paulus Æmilius grieve, when his Consulate came to an end? On the contrary, every one agreed that he was fortunate to have been Consul precisely because he was not to be Consul in perpetuity. But, just because he was born to reign always, Perseus sorrowed so im-

moderately at ceasing to reign that men marvelled he did not die of that sorrow. Does any man repine because he has but one mouth? Yet who does not repine that has only one eye? It is possible that no one has yet lamented that he has not three eyes; but he is disconsolate who has only one.

So lofty is our idea of the mind of our fellow-man that we cannot bear his disdain, nor exist without his esteem. In such esteem consists the whole felicity of mankind.

Though, on the one hand, this pursuit of false glory is a signal mark of man's littleness of mind, it is on the other a signal mark of his greatness. For whatever good things he may call his own, whatever sufficiency of health and gear may be his, he remains dissatisfied if he lack the esteem of his fellows. So high does he rate the judgment of men that, whatever worldly station be his, he accounts himself unhappy unless in that sphere he stand equally well. There is no higher sphere. Nothing can deflect him from this desire, the most ineffaceable trait in the human heart; nay, even those who despise men, and rank them with the beasts that perish, continue to wish for men's admiration, and fall thus into contradicting themselves. Nature, which is stronger than all their logic, convinces them more forcibly of man's greatness than reason can convince them of his littleness.

Man is nothing more than the weakest of all reeds, but he is a reed that can think. The whole universe need not arise in wrath to overwhelm him. A fume, a drop of water, is enough to end his life. But even should the whole universe crush him, man would still be nobler than his slayer, for he is conscious of death; and what recks the universe of its power over him? Thus, all our dignity consists in the faculty of thought. It is from that point that we must raise ourselves, not from space or time. Let us strive after right thinking. There lies the first moral principle.

It is perilous to make man aware of his affinity with the beasts unless at the same time he is made aware of his own greatness. It is perilous likewise to make him, in his low estate, over-conscious of his greatness. Yet more dangerous is it to leave him ignorant of either. But it is well to show him both.

Let man value himself at his true worth. Let him think well of himself, since there is in him a nature capable of goodness; but, because of the lower side of that nature, let him not think too well. Let him despise himself, because this capacity of goodness fails of its effect; but let him not despise the capacity itself for that reason. Let him both love himself, and hate; he has within him the faculty of apprehension and of happiness; but he has not truth within him, neither absolute nor all-sufficing truth. Fain would I persuade man to seek after truth, to be ready, alert and dispassionate, to follow her there

where she may be found. And, knowing how greatly his intellect is clouded by passion, I would have him abhor in himself even the passion which urges him to the pursuit of truth, so that he be neither blinded by it when he makes his choice, nor impeded when it has been made.

To me they are equally blameworthy who choose to exalt man, and who choose to belittle him, and who choose only to make sport for him. Only can I approve them who pursue their quest with groans. The Stoics said, "Withdraw into yourselves, there you will find peace." But it is not so. Others say, "Go forth, and seek happiness in pastimes"; and *that* is not so. Evils come upon us; happiness is neither within nor without; it is in God and in ourselves.

The nature of man may be regarded from two standpoints. The first is, in relation to his destiny, which maketh him great and incomprehensible indeed; the other is, according to custom, as one would judge a horse or a dog, from seeing it run, *et animum arcendi,* which maketh him rather abject and vile. There lie the two paths which lead to such diverse judgments, and which give rise to so many disputes among philosophers. One philosopher will repudiate the conclusions of another. The first will say, "Not unto this end was man born, for all his actions reject it"; the second will reply, "Every base action sets him farther from his appointed end." Two things teach man everything concerning himself, instinct and experience.

I find it conceivable that there was a time when I was not, for my mind is the "I" of me. Therefore that "I" which thinks would never have been had death taken my mother before she gave me birth: and it follows therefore that I am no indispensable entity. Also I am neither everlasting nor infinite; but I see that in Nature there is an entity indispensable, everlasting, and infinite.

* * *

LA BRUYÈRE

Little is known of Jean de La Bruyère except that, at the age of forty, he became a member of the household of the great Condé and produced, soon after, *Les Caractères,* modelled on the Greek work of Theophrastus. The maxims which are embodied in this book are in the direct line of descent from those of La Rochefoucauld and Pascal. His portraits are, however, his outstanding achievement. They are thinly disguised representations of celebrities of the day. In the following selection, for example, Menalcas is the Comte de Brancas, who was noted for his absence of mind. La Bruyère was born in 1649 and died in 1696.

This extract is taken from Elizabeth Lee's *La Bruyère and Vauvenargues* (Constable) by permission of the owners of the copyright.

THE ABSENT-MINDED MAN

MENALCAS comes downstairs, opens the door to go out and shuts it again; he perceives that his night-cap is still on, and examining himself a little more carefully, discovers that only one side of his face is shaved, that his sword is on his right side, that his stockings are hanging about his heels, and his shirt out of his breeches. If he walks abroad he feels something strike him roughly on the face or stomach; he cannot imagine what it is, until opening his eyes and looking up he sees in front of him the shaft of a cart, or a long plank of wood, carried on a workman's shoulder. He has been seen to knock up against a blind man, when their limbs became entangled and each fell backward. Sometimes he has run right up against a prince, and has scarcely had time to squeeze himself against the wall in order to make room for his highness to pass. He seeks, rummages, mislays, gets angry, and calls his servants one after the other: they lose everything, put nothing in its place: he asks for his gloves which he has on his hands, like the woman who asked for her mask when she had it on her face. He enters the drawing-room, passes under a chandelier, to which his periwig hitches and is left hanging; the courtiers stare and laugh. Menalcas also stares, and laughs louder than the rest, and searches through the assembly for the poor mortified creature who has lost his wig. In his walks about town he thinks that he has lost his way, puts himself into a fret, and asks of the passers-by where he is: they tell him the name of his own street, he at once enters his own house but hastily runs out again, fancying himself mistaken. He comes out of the law-courts, and finding a coach at the bottom of the steps takes it for his own and gets in, the coachman whips up the horses and thinks he is driving his master home. Menalcas leaps out, crosses the court-yard, goes upstairs, walks through the ante-room and the other apartments, everything is familiar, nothing new to him, he sits down and rests, as he would at home. The master of the house arrives, Menalcas rises to receive him, treats him with great ceremony, begs him to sit down, and pays him all the attention due to a guest; he talks, muses, and talks again; the master is bored and greatly astonished. Menalcas is not less so, but does not say what he thinks, that the other is some impertinent, idle person who will at length withdraw; he hopes so, and possesses his soul in patience, but it may be night-time before he is undeceived.

Another time he visits a lady and, imagining that she is visiting him, he sits down in her armchair and has no idea of giving it up; he finds that the lady is paying him a somewhat long visit and every moment expects her to get up and go, but as that does not happen and

he is growing hungry, and it is nearly night, he asks her to sup with him; she laughs, and so loudly, that he comes to his senses.

He gets married in the morning, forgets all about it in the evening, and goes home at night as if nothing had happened. A few years later he loses his wife, she dies in his arms, he goes to the funeral, and the next day, when his servants announce dinner, he asks if his wife is ready and if she has been told.

It is also he who, entering a church, takes the blind beggar at the door for a pillar and his dish for the holy water vase, dips his hand in, when suddenly he hears the pillar speak and ask for alms; he walks down the nave, thinks he sees a praying-desk and throws himself heavily on his knees; the machine bends, pushes him, strives to cry out, and Menalcas is astonished to find himself kneeling on the legs of a little man, resting on his back, his two arms passed over his shoulders, and his joined hands holding his nose and shutting his mouth; he retires in confusion and kneels elsewhere. He takes a prayer-book from his pocket, as he thinks, but it is his slipper, that he had inadvertently pocketed before going out. He is scarcely out of the church when a footman runs after him and asks, with a laugh, if he has not got Monseigneur's slipper. Menalcas shows him his and says "these are all the slippers I have about me"; nevertheless, on searching, he finds the slipper of the Bishop of ——, whom he had just been visiting because he was kept at home by illness, and before leaving him had picked up the slipper as though it had been one of his gloves which had fallen on the ground. He once lost at cards all the money he had in his purse, went into his study, opened a cupboard, took out a money-box, withdrew the coins he wanted, and, as he thought, locked it up again in the cupboard. To his surprise he heard a barking in the cupboard he had just closed, and, astonished at such a prodigy, he opened it again, and burst out laughing to see his dog, whom he had locked up for his money-box.

He plays at backgammon and asks for something to drink; it is his turn to play, and having the dice-box in one hand and the glass in the other, being very thirsty, he gulps down the dice, and almost the box as well, throwing the liquor on the board and half drowning his antagonist.

Once when boating he asked the time, and some one handed him a watch; he had hardly taken hold of it, when, forgetting all about the time and the watch, he threw it into the river as if it were something that was in his way.

He writes a long letter, sands the paper several times, and always throws the sand into the ink-pot; but that is not all, he writes another letter, and having sealed them both, makes a mistake in the addresses; one of them is to a duke, who on opening the letter, reads the following:

"Mr. Oliver, do not fail to send me by return a load of hay." His farmer receives the other letter, opens it and reads: "My Lord, I have received with the utmost submission the commands your Grace has been pleased to give me." He writes another at night, and after sealing it puts out the candle: he is surprised to find himself in the dark, and is at a loss to conceive how it happened.

Coming down the stairs at the Louvre he meets a man going up. "Oh," says Menalcas, "you are the very person I was looking for," takes him by the hand, makes him come down with him, crosses several courtyards, walks from room to room backwards and forwards, then looking more closely at the man he has been dragging about with him for the last quarter of an hour, wonders who ever it can be, has nothing to say to him, lets him go, and turns another way.

He often asks a question and is already out of sight before you have time to reply, or he asks you how your father is, and when you say that he is very ill, Menalcas shouts back that he is very glad. He happens to meet you another time, he is charmed to see you, he has just come from your house where he had been to tell you some important news, he looks at your hand: "What a fine ruby you have. Is it a Balas ruby?" Then he leaves you, goes on his way, and that is the important business about which he was so anxious to speak to you.

He begins a story and forgets to finish it, bursts out laughing to himself at something that strikes his mind, and replies to his own thought, he hums a tune, whistles, upsets his chair, utters a plaintive cry, yawns, thinking himself to be alone. When he is at table he insensibly crumbles a heap of bread upon his plate, it is true that his neighbours want it, as well as their knives and forks, which he imagines to be all for his use.

Chancing to find himself in the company of a young widow, he speaks to her of her deceased husband, and asks the cause of his death; the lady, whose grief was naturally revived by this discourse, wept and sobbed, and told him all the details of her husband's illness, from the beginning of the fever to the supreme agony. "Madame," asks Menalcas, who had apparently listened to her with the greatest attention, "had you never another but him?"

One morning, he bids the dinner be hastened, rises before dessert, and takes leave of the company, yet you are sure to find him that day in every place in the city except where he had the appointment which caused him to neglect his dinner, and to go afoot in case he should have to wait for the carriage. You may hear him shout, scold, put himself into a rage with one of his servants. He is astounded he does not come. "Where can he be?" he says, "what is he doing, where is he to be found? If he does not come immediately, I shall discharge

him at once." The servant arrives. Menalcas asks him in a fury where he has been. The man replies that he has just returned from the errand on which his master sent him, and gives a faithful account of his commission.

You will often take him for what he is not; for a fool, because he listens little, and speaks less; for an idiot, because he talks to himself and is subject to involuntary grimaces and movements of the head; for haughty and discourteous, because when you salute him he takes no notice of you; for a man without consideration for others, because he speaks of bankruptcy in a family that lies under that ban; of executions and scaffolds before a man whose father was beheaded; of mean extraction, before wealthy farmers of the revenue who try to pass for noblemen. In short, he seems as if he were not present, and did not hear what was being talked about. He thinks and talks at the same time, but what he says is rarely what he is thinking of, consequently there is seldom any coherence in his talk; he says no when he ought to say yes, and yes, supposing that he is saying no. When he answers you his eyes may be fixed on yours, but it does not follow that he sees you. He is not looking at you, nor at anyone, nor at anything in the world. All that you can drag from him in his most communicative moments are such words as: "Yes indeed; it is true; good; all the better; I think so; certainly; oh, heaven!" and other equally appropriate monosyllables. Then he is never with those with whom he seems to be: he addresses his footman as Sir, and his friend as Jeames; a prince of the blood as his Reverence, and a Jesuit as Your Highness. When he is at mass, if the priest sneezes, he cries "God bless you." He chances to be in the company of a judge, a man of grave disposition, venerable by his age, character, and dignity, who asks him about a certain event, and demands if the circumstances were so; "Yes, miss," replies Menalcas.

Once when he was returning from the country his footmen plotted to rob him, and succeeded in their plan. They jumped off the carriage, held the torch under his nose, demanded his purse, which he delivered to them. Having reached home he told his adventure to his friends, and when they questioned him as to details, said, "Ask my servants; they were there."

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MONTESQUIEU

Charles le Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, was born near Bordeaux in 1689 and belonged to a noble family of Guienne. In his *Lettres Persanes* he makes two Persians, visiting Paris, write letters home containing their impressions of French customs. Like Swift and Voltaire

he directs, by means of this device, some trenchant blows against existing institutions. Two more ambitious works are *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* and the famous *Esprit des Lois*. In the latter he deals with the whole field of politics and history from the philosophical standpoint and seeks to inspire the reader to take large views. Montesquieu died in 1755, after having, as Voltaire declared, "restored to humanity its lost titles."

This extract from *Persian Letters* is taken from John Davidson's translation in the Broadway Translations, by permission of the publishers Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.

PARISIAN CURIOSITY

THE curiosity of the people of Paris exceeds all bounds. When I arrived, they stared at me as if I had dropped from the sky: old and young, men, women, and children, were all agog to see me. If I went abroad, everybody flew to the window. If I visited the Tuileries, I was immediately surrounded by a circle of gazers, the women forming a rainbow woven of a thousand colours. When I went sight-seeing, a hundred lorgnettes were speedily levelled at me: in fact, never was a man so stared at as I have been. I smiled frequently when I heard people who had never travelled beyond their own door, saying to each other, "He certainly looks very like a Persian." One thing struck me: I found my portraits everywhere—in all the shops, on every mantelpiece—so fearful were they lest they should not see enough of me.

So much distinction could not fail to be burdensome. I do not consider myself such a rare and wonderful specimen of humanity; and although I have a very good opinion of myself, I would never have dreamt that I could have disturbed the peace of a great city, where I was quite unknown. I therefore resolved to change my Persian dress for a European one, in order to see if my countenance would still strike people as wonderful. This experiment made me acquainted with my true value. Divested of everything foreign in my garb, I found myself estimated at my proper rate. I had reason to complain of my tailor, who had made me lose so suddenly the attention and good opinion of the public; for I sank immediately into the merest nonentity. Sometimes I would be as much as an hour in a given company, without attracting the least notice, or having an opportunity given me to speak; but, if anyone chanced to inform the company that I was a Persian, I soon overheard a murmur all round me, "Oh! ah! a Persian, is he? Most amazing! However can anybody be a Persian?"

* * *

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Rousseau was born in Geneva in 1712. He is one of those writers whose life and philosophy are so much at variance that any attempt to reconcile them is out of the question. His days were spent in wandering from place to place and in turning from one occupation to another, until he settled in Paris where he lived for years in circumstances of sordid poverty. In 1749 the turning point came when he won a prize offered by the Academy of Dijon with an essay advocating a return to nature. This success brought Rousseau immediate popularity and he wrote *Julie*, *Le Contrat Social*, and *Emile*. His views not being to the liking of the authorities, he had to fly from Paris. He was allowed to return after a time, but persecution had disturbed his mental balance, and he died in 1778. His works include comedies, operas, essays, treatises, as well as the four outstanding works—the *Confessions*, *Julie*, *Le Contrat Social* and *Emile*. The foundation of his teaching lies in the antithesis between the natural and the artificial. Civilization is a gross error and the return to nature provides the only means of escape.

The following passage is taken from the *Confessions*.

PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF

TWO things, very opposite, unite in me, without my being able to think how. My disposition is extremely ardent, my passions lively and impetuous, yet my ideas are produced slowly, with great embarrassment, and never arise until after the event. One would say my heart and understanding do not belong to the same individual. A sentiment takes possession of my soul with the rapidity of lightning, but instead of illuminating, it dazzles and confounds me; I feel all, but see nothing; I am carried away, but I am stupid; to think, I must be cool. What is astonishing is, that I have plenty of tact, penetration, and even acuteness, if I am not hurried; I can make excellent impromptus at leisure, but on the instant could never say or do anything worth notice. I could hold a tolerable conversation by the post, as they say the Spaniards play at chess; and when I read that anecdote of a duke of Savoy, who turned round, while on a journey, to cry out, *à votre gorge, marchand de Paris!* I said, "Here is a trait of my character!"

This slowness of thought, joined to vivacity of feeling, I am not only sensible of in conversation, but even when I am alone and working. My ideas arrange themselves in my head with incredible difficulty; they circulate there in a dull way, and ferment till they agitate me, fill me with heat, and give me palpitations. During this stir of

emotions I see nothing clearly, cannot write a single word, and must wait till it is over. Insensibly the tumult subsides, the chaos acquires form, and each circumstance takes its proper place; but very slowly, and only after long and confused agitation. Have you never seen an opera in Italy? There during the change of scene everything is in confusion, the decorations are intermingled, and anyone would suppose that all would be overthrown; yet by little and little everything is arranged, nothing appears wanting, and we feel surprised to see the tumult succeeded by the most delightful spectacle. This is a resemblance of what passes in my brain when I attempt to write. Had I always waited till that confusion was past, and then painted, in all their beauty, the objects that had presented themselves, few authors would have surpassed me.

Thence arises the extreme difficulty I find in writing; my manuscripts blotted, scratched, and scarcely legible, attest the trouble they cost me; nor is there one of them but I have been obliged to transcribe four or five times before it went to press. Never could I do anything when placed at a table, pen in hand; it must be walking among the rocks, or in the woods. It is at night in my bed, during my wakeful hours, that I compose: it may be judged how slowly, particularly for a man who has not the advantage of verbal memory, and never in his life could retain by heart six verses. Some of my periods I have turned and returned in my head five or six nights before they were fit to be put to paper—thus it is that I succeed better in works that require laborious attention than those that appear more trivial, such as letters, in which I could never succeed, and being obliged to write one is to me a serious punishment; nor can I express my thoughts on the most trivial subjects without it costing me hours of fatigue. If I write immediately what strikes me, I know neither where to end nor where to begin; my letter is a long, confused, unconnected string of expressions, that, when read, can hardly be understood.

Not only are my ideas painful in their expression, but are so even in their formation. I have studied men, and think myself a tolerably keen observer of them, yet I know nothing from what I see, but all from what I remember; it is only amidst the images of my memory that my mind works freely. From all that is said, from all that passes in my presence, I feel nothing, conceive nothing, the exterior sign being all that strikes me; afterwards it returns to my remembrance; I recollect the place, the time, the manner, look, and gesture, not a circumstance escapes me; it is then, from what has been done or said that I imagine what has been thought, and I have rarely found myself mistaken.

So little master of my understanding when alone, let anyone judge what I must be in conversation, where to speak with any degree of ease you must think of a thousand things at the same time. The bare

idea of so many requisites, of which I am sure to forget some, is sufficient to intimidate me. I cannot comprehend how people can have the confidence to converse in large companies, where each word must pass in review before so many, and where it must be necessary to know their several characters and histories to avoid saying what might give offence. In this particular, those who frequent the world would have a great advantage, as they know better where to be silent, and can speak with greater confidence; yet even they sometimes let fall absurdities. In what predicament, then, must he be who drops as it were from the clouds? It is almost impossible he should speak for a single minute with impunity.

In a *tête-à-tête* there is a still worse inconvenience: that is, the necessity of talking perpetually, or at least the necessity of answering when spoken to, and keeping up the conversation when the other is silent. This insupportable constraint is alone sufficient to disgust me with society; for I cannot form an idea of a greater torment than being obliged to speak continually without time for recollection. I know not whether it proceeds from my mortal hatred to all constraint; but it is certain that if I am obliged to speak, I infallibly talk nonsense. What is still worse, instead of learning how to be silent when I have absolutely nothing to say, it is generally at such times that I have a violent inclination to chatter; and endeavouring to pay my debt of conversation as speedily as possible, I hastily gabble a number of words without ideas, only too happy when they mean nothing at all. Thus in my endeavours to conquer or hide my incapacity, I rarely fail to make it apparent.

I think I have said enough to show that, though not a fool, I have frequently passed for one, even among people capable of judging; this was the more vexatious, as my physiognomy and eyes promised otherwise, and expectation being frustrated, my stupidity appeared the more shocking. This explanation which a particular incident rendered it necessary to give, will not be useless in the sequel, being a key to many of my actions that might otherwise appear attributable to a morose temper, and this I by no means possess. I should love society as much as any man if I were not certain to exhibit myself in it, not only to my disadvantage, but of a nature totally different from what I really am. The plan I have adopted of writing and retirement is exactly that which suits me. Had I frequented society, my worth would never have been known, no one would even have suspected it; this is proved by the fact that Madame Dupin, although she was a woman of intellect, and one in whose house I lived for several years, has often since remarked it to me.

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DENIS DIDEROT

THE son of a cutler of Langres, in Champagne, Diderot was born in 1713. As he refused to enter the Church, to study law, or to become a physician he was left by an angry father to his own resources and for ten years he led a wretched existence as a hack writer. Another twenty years and more were spent upon the *Encyclopédie*, of which he was the chief editor. This did not prevent him from producing a great number of miscellaneous writings on all manner of subjects. When later on he got into grave financial difficulties, he was helped by the Empress Catherine of Russia. He spent a short time at her Court and then returned to Paris where he died in 1784. He was a man with a marvellous range of knowledge but he lacked the power to bring this to a focus so as to present a coherent and consistent account of his views on any subject.

The following essay from *Thoughts on Art and Style* has been specially translated for this volume by J. W. Jeaffreson. In explanation of the whimsical references in the essay it may be said that Madame Geoffrin, thinking to do Diderot a service, refurnished his room and that the Laïs to whom he refers at the end of the essay was a picture by Vernet which the painter gave him. He refused to take any money for it, but Diderot insisted on paying him something for the paint. He could thus still maintain that Laïs herself had cost him nothing.

LAMENT FOR MY OLD DRESSING-GOWN OR A WARNING TO THOSE POSSESSING MORE TASTE THAN FORTUNE

WHY not have kept it? It had grown used to me; I had grown used to it. It fitted every crease of my body but did not cramp me. I was both picturesque and beautiful in it but the new one, stiff and starched, makes of me a tailor's mannikin. There was no need to which it did not lend itself obligingly; for poverty is almost ever forward with kindly offices. If a book was coated with dust, one of its lappets was prompt to wipe it. If the thickened ink refused to flow from my quill, it would proffer its side. The frequent services it had rendered me could be seen marked upon it in long black streaks. These streaks bespoke the writer, the man of letters, the man of toil. Now I look like a rich idler; no one knows who I am.

Beneath its shelter I dreaded neither a serving-man's clumsiness, nor my own; neither sparks from the fire, nor dripping water. I was absolute master of my old dressing-gown; of the new I am the thrall.

The dragon mounting guard over the golden fleece was not more uneasy than am I. Care besets me.

The passionate greybeard, who has delivered himself bound hand and foot to a young madcap's whims and mercy, repeats from morn till eve: "Where is my old, my kindly housekeeper? What demon possessed me on the day when, for this one's sake, I sent her packing?" Thereat he weeps, he sighs.

I weep not, neither do I sigh; but every minute I reiterate: "Cursed be he who contrived the art of turning common stuff into a thing of price by dipping it in scarlet dye! Cursed be the precious garment that I must now use so carefully! Where is my old, my humble, my handy rag of chintz?"

Stick to your old friends, my friends. Dread the taint of wealth. Let my example be a lesson to you. Poverty has its liberties; opulence its trammels.

O Diogenes, couldst thou but see thy disciple garbed in the flaunting cloak of Aristippus, how thou wouldst laugh. O Aristippus, this splendid cloak was purchased by much grovelling. What comparison can thy soft, crawling, effeminate existence sustain with the free, staunch life of the tatterdemalion cynic? I have quitted the tub in which I was a king to serve beneath a tyrant.

That is not all, my friend. Hearken to the ravages of luxury, the sequels of consistent luxury.

My old dressing-gown was one with the other trumpery surrounding me. A rush-bottomed chair, a wooden table, a Bergamo tapestry, a deal board supporting a few books, a few smoke-grimed prints, without borders, tacked by their corners upon the said tapestry, together with three or four plaster casts hanging between the prints—these combined with my ancient dressing-gown to form the most harmonious indigence.

All is now disattuned. General effect, unity, beauty are gone.

A new barren housekeeper taking service in a presbytery, a new wife installed in a widower's house, a minister replacing a fallen minister, a Molinist prelate seizing upon the diocese of a Jansenist prelate do not cause more upset than the scarlet intruder has caused with me.

I can stand the sight of a peasant woman without qualm; the square of coarse linen covering her head; the tousled hair hanging about her cheeks; the rags worn to holes only half clothing her; the wretched petticoat reaching but half way down her legs. Her bare, miry feet are no offence to me; they portray a calling I respect; they are the sum of the disfavours of a requisite and miserable station that I pity. But my gorge rises; and, despite the perfumed air following in her wake, I avert my steps and turn away my looks from the strumpet whose headgear of English lace, torn wristbands, soiled silken hose,

and shoes down at heel show me to-day's poverty in partnership with yesterday's opulence.

Such would have been my dwelling had not the imperious scarlet brought all to its own diapason.

I beheld the Bergamo tapestry yield the wall to which it had clung so long to damask hangings. Two prints, not without merit—Poussin's *Manna Falling in the Desert,* and the same artist's *Esther in the Presence of Ahasuerus*—the one, unhappy Esther, was shamefully expelled by an *Old Man* by Rubens; and the *Falling Manna* was scattered by a *Storm* from the brush of Vernet. The rush-bottomed chair was banished to the antechamber in favour of a morocco armchair. Homer, Virgil, Horace, and Cicero have relieved the sagging plank of their weight and withdrawn into a richly inlaid cupboard, a sanctuary worthier of them than of me. A great mirror has taken possession of my mantelpiece. The two pretty casts I owed to Falconet's friendship and which he had mended with his own hand have been evicted by a crouching Venus; modern clay shattered by antique bronze.

The wooden table still stood its ground under cover of a multitude of pamphlets and papers piled haphazard and destined seemingly long to screen it from menace of catastrophe. But its fate was sealed, and one day, despite my sloth, pamphlets and papers went to take their ordered places in the grip of a handsome writing-desk.

O baneful instinct of propriety! Tact, delicate and ruinous, taste sublime that alters and displaces, builds up and casts down, empties the money-chests of fathers, leaves daughters dowerless and sons unschooled, brings forth so many lovely things and so great evils; thou, that in my home didst substitute the fatal, precious desk for the wooden table, it is thou that ruinest the nations; it is thou that perchance some day wilt carry my chattels to the Pont Saint Michel and the hoarse voice of the public auctioneer shall be heard proclaiming: "Twenty louis for a crouching Venus."

The space remaining between the top of this desk and Vernet's *Storm* made a gap distressing to the eye. The gap was filled with a clock; and what a clock! a clock *à la Geoffrin,* a clock of contrasting gold and bronze.

There was a vacant corner beside my window. This corner called for a secretaire; it got it.

Between the top of the secretaire and the fine head by Rubens another afflicting void—it was filled with two La Grenées.

Here is a *Magdalene* by the same artist; yonder, a sketch either by Vien or Machy; for I have also indulged in sketches. And thus it was that the edifying hovel of Denis the philosopher became the scandalous closet of a publican and I an affront to the nation's poverty.

Of my original mediocrity all that now remains is a list carpet. This mean floor-covering is out of keeping with my luxury; to that I am

alive. But I have sworn and swear—for never shall the feet of Denis the philosopher tread a masterpiece of the Savonnerie—that I will not part with this carpet, just as the peasant transferred from his cottage to his sovereign's palace would not part with his clogs. When at morn, arrayed in sumptuous scarlet, I step into my study, if I cast down my eyes, they encounter my old list carpet. It reminds me of my quondam station, and pride halts upon the threshold of my heart. No, my friend, no; I am not corrupted. My door still opens to him that calls upon me in his need: he finds me affable as of yore. I hearken to him; I give him counsel, aid, and pity. My soul has not grown hard; my head is not uplifted. My back, as heretofore, is round and kind. The frankness and the feeling are still the same. My luxury is new upon me, and as yet the poison has not worked. But with time, who knows what may come to pass? What is to be looked for of one that has forgotten wife and daughter, run into debt, ceased to be a husband and a father, and who, instead of laying by deep in a trusty coffer a useful sum. . . .

Ah, holy prophet, lift your hands to heaven! Pray for a soul in jeopardy! Say unto God: "If Thou seest in thy decrees eternal that riches corrupt the heart of Denis, spare not the masterpieces that he idolizes; destroy them and reduce him to his pristine poverty"; and I, for my part, will say to heaven: "O God, I am resigned to the prayer of the holy prophet and to Thy will. I abandon everything to Thee; take back all; yea, all, except the Vernet. Ah, leave me the Vernet! It was not the painter but Thou that madest it. Respect this work of friendship and of Thine. Behold this lighthouse, behold this tower rising hard by on the right, behold this aged tree the winds have torn. How fair is this mass! Beneath the darksome mass, see yonder rocks clothed with verdure. Thus were they fashioned by Thy puissant hand; by Thy beneficence thus clothed. See this uneven terrace sloping from the rocks' foot toward the sea. It is an image of that dilapidation thou hast permitted time to achieve upon earth's stablest things. Would Thy sun have lighted it in any other fashion? God, if Thou dost utterly blot out this work of art, men will say Thou art a jealous God. Have pity on the poor wretches scattered on this shore. Thou hast shown them the depths of the abyss. Is it not enough? Hast Thou saved them only for perdition? Hearken to the prayer of this one thanking Thee. Succour the efforts of this other now gathering together the miserable remnants of his fortune. Close Thine ear to the imprecations of this wild blasphemer. Alas, he reckoned on so profitable a homecoming; he had meditated rest and retirement; it was the last of all his journeyings. A hundred times, upon the way, he had figured up the total of his wealth, had planned its laying out; and now his hopes are all frustrated; there is scarcely left to him the wherewithal to cover his naked limbs. Let the love of

this man and wife move Thy pity. See with what terror Thou hast filled the woman. She gives Thee thanks for the harm Thou hast not done her, the while her infant, too young to know to what perils Thou didst expose him, his father, and his mother, is busied with the faithful companion of his travels; he is refastening the collar of his dog. Have mercy on the guileless babe. Behold the mother newly escaped from the waters with her spouse; not for herself she trembled; it was for her child. See how she grapples him to her bosom; see how she covers him with kisses. Recognize, O God, the waters Thou createdst. Recognize them, both when tossed by Thy breath and when appeased by Thy hand. Recognize the sombre clouds Thou didst gather and which Thou art now pleased to scatter. Already they part and recede. Already the day-star's light is renewed upon the face of the waters; by yon horizon, flushing red, I presage calm. How remote that horizon is. It has no confine with the sea. The sky goes down below it and seems to revolve about the globe. Complete Thy lightening of the sky; restore the sea to utter calm. Grant that these mariners may refloat their stranded vessel; further their labour; give them strength and—leave me my picture. Leave it me, as the rod wherewith Thou wilt chastise the vain man. Already it is not me that people come to visit and to hear; it is Vernet they come to admire in my lodging. The painter has humbled the philosopher."

O my friend, how beautiful is the Vernet I possess. The subject is the close of a tempest without distressing catastrophe. The billows yet run high; the welkin is wrapped in clouds. The sailors are busy on their stranded ship; the inhabitants are hastening from the neighbouring mountains. What wit the artist has. He has required but a small number of main figures to render all the circumstances of the moment he has selected. How true is the whole scene! With what lightness, facility, and vigour all is painted. I would fain keep this testimony of his friendship. My son-in-law shall hand it on to his children, his children to theirs, and they to the children that shall be born of them.

Could you but see the fine *ensemble* of this canvas; what harmony everywhere; how linked the effects; how tellingly all is done without strain or affectation; how misty the mountains on the right; how beautiful these rocks and the buildings reared upon them; how picturesque this tree; how this terrace is lighted and what gradation of the light; how well these figures are placed, how true, how active, natural, and living; how they interest us; what vigour in the painting of them; what purity of line; how they stand out from the background; the huge sweep of this space; the truth of these waters; these storm-clouds, this sky, this horizon! Here the background is devoid of light and the foreground illumined, contrary to ordinary technique. Come and see my Vernet; but do not take it from me.

With time debts will be discharged; remorse will die down; and my enjoyment will be pure. Fear not lest the rage for accumulating lovely things take hold of me. The friends I had, I have; and their number has not increased. I have Laïs, but Laïs has me not. Happy in her arms, I am ready to yield her to one whom I love and whom she would render happier than me. And—to whisper my secret in your ear—Laïs, whose price to others is so dear, has cost me nothing.

* * *

LUC DE VAUVENARGUES

Vauvenargues loved action, and it was a sore disappointment to him that each avenue to it was closed in turn. Born in 1715, he entered the army and, after a brief period of brilliant promise, returned from the ill-starred expedition to Prague, broken in health. He had influential friends who knew his worth. One of these was Voltaire who made a fruitless attempt to start him in diplomacy. Vauvenargues was then advised to settle in Paris and to engage in literary work. Here he was baulked by ill health and a single volume was all that he was able to produce during this period. These successive blows quite failed to break his spirit and his serene fortitude is apparent in every page that he wrote. He ranks with the best of the French writers of *pensées* and maxims and how good these are even the selections in these pages will serve to show. He is ever pleading for moderation in all the affairs of men.

The following selection is reprinted from Elizabeth Lee's *La Bruyère and Vauvenargues* (Constable) by permission of the owners of the copyright.

THE ART OF DEALING WITH MANKIND

HE WHO knows men and understands how to deal with them has no need of the vulgar artifices of flattery in order to win hearts. He is candid, ingenious, and friendly; he does not display a vain pomp of expression, nor does he adorn his conversation with figures of speech that would only serve to show off his own intelligence without interesting other people. Wherever he may chance to meet him, at table, on a journey, at the play, in a minister's waiting-room, or at the prince's palace, if he finds himself in the company of a man likely to listen to him, he joins him, gains influence over him, persuades him by appealing to the serious side of his mind, forces him to open his heart, excites and awakes in him passions and interests that were dormant or that he did not recognize, foresees or guesses his thoughts, and winds himself in a moment into his entire confidence. Thus he can win those whom he does not know, as he can preserve the regard

of those he has already won. He enters so deeply into the character of his interlocutor, what he says to him is so nicely proportioned to his thoughts and feelings, that where others would comprehend nothing, or take no pleasure, he understands all. Thus he prefers a *tête-à-tête;* but if circumstances compel him to speak before several persons of varying manners or opinions, or if he has to decide between two men who do not agree, since he knows the different sides of human affairs, since he can exhaust the for and against of every subject, and set all in the best light and reconcile opposite views, he quickly seizes the hidden point by which diverse opinions may be reconciled, and his conclusion is of such a nature that none of those who submitted themselves to his counsel can object to it. He does not know how to shine at a supper party or in a scrappy, interrupted conversation, where each speaker follows the vivacity of his imagination or humour without reflection, but the art of pleasing and dominating in serious conversation, gentle acquiescence, and the charms of attractive intercourse, are the amiable gifts which nature has accorded him. He is the most eloquent man in the world when it is a question of softening a haughty mind, or of rousing a weak one, of consoling an unhappy man, or of inspiring a timid and reserved one with courage and confidence. He knows how to soften, conquer, convince, rouse, according to need; he has the sort of mind which serves to rule men's hearts, and which is suited for anything of which the end is noble, useful, great.

* * *

JOSEPH JOUBERT

Sainte-Beuve and Arnold having joined in praising Joubert, he has therefore been termed "the critic's critic." His single volume of *Pensées,* which was not published till 1838, is really a crystallization of his brilliant conversation. He cared nothing for writing, but loved to gather round him a few congenial spirits like Fontanes and Chateaubriand and talk of the things that mattered. He was an idealist who remained unmoved by all the turmoil around him. In form his work bears some kinship to the proverb-clusters of the Old Testament, and is an outstanding example of a form in which the French have excelled. Joubert was born in 1754 and died in 1824.

The following passages have been taken from Henry Attwell's translation of the *Pensées.*

OF GOVERNMENTS

STATESMANSHIP is the art of leading the masses, or the majority. Its glory is to lead them, not where they want to go, but where they ought to go.

In those governments which obey a numerical superiority, it is a static or arithmetical dignity—a gross or quantitative preponderance—that judges human affairs.

The punishment of bad princes is to be thought worse than they really are.

Every legitimate authority should respect its extent and its limits.

Forms of government become established of themselves. They shape themselves, they are not created. We may give them strength and consistency, but we cannot call them into being. Let us rest assured that the form of government can never be a matter of choice: it is almost always a matter of necessity.

One of the surest ways of killing a tree is to lay bare its roots. It is the same with institutions. We must not be too ready to disinter the origin of those we wish to preserve. All beginnings are small.

Imitate time. It destroys slowly. It undermines, wears, loosens, separates. It does not uproot.

Governments! War, peace, the public weal—these are your concern. You are established in order that private individuals may be freed from these heavy cares. In a well-ordered State those only need be anxious about public affairs whose business it is to direct them. A sheltering tree is their emblem. It is, truly, of the first importance that, if private persons are to be released from these anxieties, the government should be efficient—that is to say, that its parts should be so harmonized that its functions may be easily performed, and its permanence ensured. A people constantly in unrest is always busied in building: its shelter is but a tent—it is encamped, not established.

How many weak shoulders have craved heavy burdens!

* * *

XAVIER DE MAISTRE

Xavier de Maistre presents a striking contrast to his elder brother Joseph who was the first leader under Napoleon to seek a restoration of Catholicism. The younger brother is noted for one book, *Voyage autour de ma Chambre*, which is a model of pleasing discursiveness and has had many imitators. Xavier de Maistre was born in 1763 and died in 1852.

The following extract is taken from Henry Attwell's translation, *A Journey around my Room.*

CORRESPONDENCE

THE upset of my post-chaise has rendered the reader the service of shortening my journey by a good dozen chapters; for upon getting up, I found myself close to my bureau, and saw that I had no time left for any observations upon a number of engravings and pictures which had yet to be surveyed, and which might have lengthened my excursions into the realm of painting.

Leaving to the right the portraits of Raphael and his mistress, the Chevalier d'Assas and the Shepherdess of the Alps, and taking the left, the side on which the window is situated, my bureau comes into view. It is the first and most prominent object the traveller's eyes light upon, taking the route I have indicated.

It is surmounted by a few shelves that serve as a book-case, and the whole is terminated by a bust which completes the pyramid, and contributes more than any other object to the adornment of this region.

Upon opening the first drawer to the left, we find an inkstand, paper of all kinds, pens ready mended, and sealing wax. This would suffice to set the most indolent person longing to write.

I am sure, dear Jenny, that if you chanced to open this drawer, you would reply to the letter I wrote you a year ago.

In the opposite drawer lies a confused heap of materials for a touching history of the prisoner of Pignerol,[1] which, my dear friends, you will ere long read.

Between these two drawers is a recess into which I throw whatever letters I receive. All that have reached me during the last ten years are there. The oldest of them are arranged according to date in several packets; the new ones lie pell-mell. Besides these, I have several dating from my early boyhood.

How great a pleasure it is to behold again, through the medium of these letters, the interesting scenes of our early years, to be once again borne back to those happy days that we shall see no more!

How full is my heart, and how deeply tinged with sadness is its joy, as my eyes wander over those words traced by one who is gone for ever! That handwriting is his; and it was his heart that guided his hand. It was to me that he addressed this letter; and this letter is all that is left me of him!

When I put my hand into this recess, I seldom leave the spot for the whole day. In like manner, a traveller will pass rapidly through whole

[1] This work was never published.

provinces of Italy, making a few hurried and trivial observations on the way, and upon reaching Rome will take up his abode there for months.

This is the richest vein in the mine I am exploring. How changed I find my ideas and sentiment, and how altered do my friends appear when I examine them as they were in days gone by, and as they are now! In these mirrors of the past I see them in mortal agitation about plans which no longer disturb them.

Here I find an event announced which we evidently looked upon as a great misfortune; but the end of the letter is wanting, and the circumstance is so entirely forgotten that I cannot now make out what the matter was which so concerned us. We were possessed by a thousand prejudices. We knew nothing of the world, and of men. But then, how warm was our intercourse! How intimate our friendship! How unbounded our confidence!

In our ignorance there was bliss. But now—ah! all is now changed. We have been compelled, as others, to read the human heart; and truth, falling like a bomb into the midst of us, has destroyed for ever the enchanted palace of illusion.

* * *

VICTOR HUGO

THERE are some writers whose output, on account of its sheer massiveness, leaves the critic breathless. After all deductions have been made there remains the monumental achievement, and consideration of the physical effort involved alone gives the beholder no option but to marvel in silent awe. Hugo's life was long—he was born in 1802 and died in 1885—and every moment of it must have been amply filled. As a poet he worked every vein from lyric to epic. As a prose-writer he excelled equally as essayist and novelist. Whether he is depicting scenes in Norway, or San Domingo, or Paris, he is equally at home. As a boy he accompanied his father, who was an officer in Napoleon's army, to Spain and Italy. When the family returned to Paris he began writing verse and, in conjunction with his brother, founded a journal significantly named *Le Conservateur littéraire*. From being a conservative and close follower of Chateaubriand, Hugo developed into a Romanticist and, more gradually, a republican. His opposition to Napoleon III led to his exile. He settled first in Brussels and then, for eighteen years, in the Channel Islands. Through all these vicissitudes he laboured at his pen unceasingly and on his return to Paris in 1870 was hailed as the foremost writer of the day.

The following essay is taken from *Things Seen* by permission of Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.

TALLEYRAND

May 19th, 1838

IN THE Rue Saint-Florentin there are a palace and a sewer.

The palace, which is of a rich, handsome, and gloomy style of architecture, was long called: *Hôtel de l'Infantado;* nowadays may be seen on the frontal of its principal doorway: Hotel Talleyrand. During the forty years that he resided in this street, the last tenant of this palace never, perhaps, cast his eyes upon this sewer.

He was a strange, redoubtable, and important personage; his name was Charles Maurice de Périgord; he was of noble descent like Machiavelli, a priest like Gondi, unfrocked like Fouché, witty like Voltaire, and lame like the devil. It might be averred that everything in him was lame like himself; the nobility which he had placed at the service of the Republic, the priesthood which he had dragged through the parade-ground then cast into the gutter, the marriage which he had broken off through a score of exposures and a voluntary separation, the understanding which he disgraced by acts of baseness.

This man, nevertheless, had grandeur; the splendours of the two *régimes* were united in him: he was Prince de Vaux in the kingdom of France, and a Prince of the French Empire. During thirty years, from the interior of his palace, from the interior of his thoughts, he had almost controlled Europe. He had permitted himself to be on terms of familiarity with the Revolution, and had smiled upon it: ironically, it is true, but the Revolution had not perceived this. He had come in contact with, known, observed, penetrated, inspired all the men of his time, all the ideas of his time, and there had been moments in his life when, holding in his hand the four or five great threads which moved the civilized universe, he had for his puppet Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, Mediator of the Swiss Confederation. That is the game which was played by this man.

After the Revolution of July, the old race, of which he was the high chamberlain, having fallen, he found himself once more on his feet, and said to the people of 1830, seated bare-armed upon a heap of paving-stones—Make me your ambassador!

He received the confession of Mirabeau, and the first confidence of Thiers. He said of himself that he was a great poet, and that he had composed a trilogy in three dynasties:—Act I, *the Empire of Bonaparte;* Act II, *the House of Bourbon;* Act III, *the House of Orleans.*

He did all this in his palace, and, in this palace, like a spider in his web, he allured and caught in succession, heroes, thinkers, great men, conquerors, Kings, Princes, Emperors, Bonaparte, Siéyès, Madame de

Staël, Chateaubriand, Benjamin Constant, Alexander of Russia, William of Prussia, Francis of Austria, Louis XVIII, Louis-Philippe, all the gilded and glittering flies who buzz through the history of the last forty years. All this glistening throng, fascinated by the penetrating eye of this man, passed in turn under that gloomy entrance bearing upon the architrave the inscription:—Hotel Talleyrand.

Well, the day before yesterday, May 17th, 1838, this man died. Doctors came and embalmed the body. To do this, they, like the Egyptians, removed the bowels from the stomach, and the brain from the skull. The work done, after having transformed the Prince de Talleyrand into a mummy, and nailed down this mummy in a coffin lined with white satin, they retired, leaving upon a table the brain—that brain which had thought so many things, inspired so many men, erected so many buildings, led two revolutions, duped twenty kings, held the world. The doctors being gone, a servant entered; he saw what they had left: Hulloa! they have forgotten this. What was to be done with it? It occurred to him that there was a sewer in the street; he went there, and threw the brain into this sewer.

Finis rerum.

* * *

SAINTE-BEUVE

The greatest of French critics, Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, was born at Boulogne in 1804. His first literary work took the form of miscellaneous articles for a newspaper. One of these brought him into touch with Victor Hugo, and under his influence Sainte-Beuve began to publish verse. It was, however, as a critic that he was to do lasting work and his *Histoire de Port-Royal*, *Chateaubriand et son Groupe Littéraire*—two volumes of lectures—together with the collections of essays, *Portraits Littéraires*, *Portraits de Femmes*, and *Portraits Contemporains* show that he had now found a task thoroughly to his liking. The fifteen volumes of the *Causeries du Lundi* followed by the thirteen volumes entitled *Nouveaux Lundis* contain the critical work of the latter part of his life. He was heartily opposed to all forms of literary dogmatism and pleaded strongly for intellectual freedom as the foundation of all criticism. Sainte-Beuve died in 1869.

The following essay is taken from the translation, *Monday Chats*, by William Matthews.

JOUBERT

A PERSON was astonished one day that Geoffroy could return again and again to the same theatrical piece, and make so many articles upon it. One of his witty brethren, M. de Feletz, replied: "Geoffroy

has three ways of making an article, *to assert, to re-assert, and to contradict himself (dire, redire, et se contredire).*" I have already spoken more than once of M. Joubert, and to-day I would like to speak of him again, without repeating and without contradicting myself. The new edition [1] which is now publishing will furnish me with the occasion and perhaps with the means of doing so.

The first time that I spoke of M. Joubert, I had to answer this question, which one had a right to ask me: "Who is M. Joubert?" To-day the question will no longer be asked. Although he may not be destined ever to become popular as a writer, the first publication of his two volumes of *Thoughts and Letters*, in 1842, sufficed to give him a place, at the very outset, in the esteem of connoisseurs and judges, and to-day it is only necessary to extend a little the circle of his readers.

His life was simple, and I recall it here only for those who love to know what kind of a man one speaks of when he treats of an author. M. Joubert, who was born in 1754 and died in 1824, was, in his lifetime, as little of an author as possible. He was one of those happy spirits who pass their lives in thinking, in talking with their friends, in dreaming in solitude, in meditating upon some work which they will never accomplish, and which will come to us only in fragments. These fragments, by their quality, and in spite of some faults of a too subtle thought, are in this instance sufficiently meritorious to entitle the author to live in the memory of the future. M. Joubert was, in his day, the most delicate and the most original type of that class of honest people which the old society alone produced—spectators, listeners who had neither ambition nor envy, who were curious, at leisure, attentive, and disinterested, who took an interest in everything, the true *amateurs* of beautiful things. "To converse and to know—it was in this, above all things, that consisted, according to Plato, the happiness of private life." This class of connoisseurs and of amateurs, so fitted to enlighten and to restrain talent, has almost disappeared in France since every one there has followed a profession. "We should always," said M. Joubert, "have a corner of the head open and free, that we may have a place for the opinions of our friends, where we may lodge them provisionally. It is really insupportable to converse with men who have, in their brains, only compartments which are wholly occupied, and into which nothing external can enter. Let us have hospitable hearts and minds." Go, then, to-day, and demand intellectual hospitality, welcome for your ideas, your growing views, of hurried, busy minds, filled wholly with themselves, true torrents roaring with their own thoughts! M. Joubert, in his youth, coming in 1778 at the age of twenty-four from his province of Périgord to Paris, found there what one finds no longer to-day; he lived there as one lived then: he *chatted*. What he did in those days of youth may be summed up in that single

[1] Of his *Pensées, Essais, Maximes, et Correspondance.*

word. He chatted then with famous people of letters; he knew Marmontel, La Harpe, d'Alembert; he knew especially Diderot, by nature the most gracious and the most hospitable of spirits. The influence of the latter upon him was great, greater than one would suppose, seeing the difference in their conclusions. Diderot had certainly in M. Joubert a singular pupil, one who was pure-minded, finally a Platonist and a Christian, smitten with the *beau ideal* and saintliness; studying and adoring piety, chastity, modesty, and never finding, to express himself upon these noble subjects, any style sufficiently ethereal, nor any expression sufficiently luminous. However, it is only by that contact with Diderot that one can fully explain the inoculation of M. Joubert with certain ideas, then so new, so bold, and which he rendered truer by elevating and rectifying them. M. Joubert had his Diderot period when he tried everything; later, he made a choice. Always, even at an early day, he had tact; taste did not come to him till afterward. "Good judgment in literature," said he, "is a very slow faculty, which does not reach the last point of its growth till very late." Reaching that point of maturity, M. Joubert was sufficiently just to Diderot to say that there are many more *follies of style* than *follies of thought* in his works. It was especially for his interest and initiation in art and literature that he was indebted to Diderot. But, in falling into a soul so delicate and so light, those ideas of literary reform and of the regeneration of art, which in Diderot had preserved a kind of homely and prosaic, a smoky and declamatory character, were brightened and purified, and assumed an ideal character which approximated them insensibly to the Greek beauty; for M. Joubert was a Greek, he was an Athenian touched with the Socratic grace. "It seems to me," said he, "much more difficult to be a modern than to be an ancient." He was especially an ancient in the calmness and moderation of his sentiments; he disliked everything that was sensational, all undue emphasis. He demanded a lively and gentle agreeableness, a certain internal, perpetual joy, giving to the movement and to the form ease and suppleness, to the expression clearness, light, and transparency. It is principally in these that he made beauty consist:

> The Athenians were delicate in mind and ear. They never would have endured a word fitted to displease, even though one had only quoted it. One would say that they were always in good humour when writing. They disapproved in style of the austerity which reveals hard, harsh, sad, or severe manners.

He said again:

> Those proud Romans had a hard ear, which it was necessary to caress a long time to dispose them to listen to beautiful things. Hence that oratorical style which one finds even in their wisest historians. The Greeks, on the contrary, were endowed with perfect organs, easy to put in play, and

which it was only necessary to touch in order to move them. Again, the simplest dress of an elegant thought sufficed to please them, and in descriptions they were satisfied with pure truth. They observed especially the maxim, *Nothing in excess.* Much choice and purity in the thoughts; words assorted and beautiful by their own harmony; finally, the sobriety required to prevent anything from weakening an impression—these formed the character of their literature.

Upon Pigalle and modern statuary as opposed to the ancient, one might cite from him thoughts of the same kind, whole pages which mark at once and very clearly in what respect he agrees with Diderot, and wherein he separates from him. Thus, then, about the epoch of '89, there was in France a man already at maturity, thirty years old, eight years older than André Chénier, and fourteen years older than Chateaubriand, who was fully prepared to comprehend them, to unite them, to furnish them with incitements and new views, to enable them to extend and complete their horizon. This was the part, indeed, of M. Joubert touching M. de Chateaubriand, whom he knew in 1800, on the return of the latter from London. M. de Chateaubriand, at that fine period of his life (that fine period, for me, is the literary period, and extends from *Atala,* by *René,* by *The Martyrs,* even to the *Last of the Abencerrages*), M. de Chateaubriand had then, as a poet, a happiness which very few persons enjoy: he found two friends, two distinct critics, Fontanes and Joubert, made expressly for him, to inform him or to guide him. One has commonly but one guardian angel, he then had two: one entirely guardian, Fontanes, restraining him in private, defending him when necessary before everybody, covering him with a buckler in the *mêlée;* the other, rather fitted to incite and to inspire—M. Joubert, who encouraged him in an undertone, or murmured to him sweet counsel in a contradiction full of grace. The best, the finest criticism to be made upon the first and great literary works of M. de Chateaubriand, might still be found in the Letters and Thoughts of M. Joubert. This is not the place to examine and to disentangle that criticism; I shall, nevertheless, touch somewhat upon it presently.

The life of Joubert is all in his thoughts; but one would not say of that life the little that is to be said of it, if he did not speak of Madame de Beaumont. That daughter of the old minister, M. de Montmorin, who escaped during the Reign of Terror from the fate of the rest of her family, and who found favour on account of her weakness and paleness, was one of those touching beings who only glide through life, and who leave there a trace of light. M. Joubert, who was already married, and who spent a part of the year at Villeneuve-sur-Yonne, had met her in Burgundy at the door of a cottage, where she had taken refuge. He was immediately attached to her; he loved her. He would

have loved her with a sentiment livelier than friendship, if there had been for this exquisite soul a livelier sentiment. Madame Beaumont, still young, had infinite grace. Her mind was quick, solid, exalted; her form delicate and aërial. She had formerly known and appreciated André Chénier. Rulhière had had a seal engraved for her which represented an oak with this device: "A breath agitates me; nothing shakes me." The device was just; but the image of the oak may seem somewhat proud. Be this as it may, that frail and graceful shell, that *sensitive reed*, which seemed to abandon itself to the least breath, enclosed a strong, ardent soul, capable of a passionate devotion. Struck in her tenderest place, victim of an ill-assorted union, she had little love for life; mortally attacked, she felt that it was fleeing from her, and she hastened to give it up. While waiting for death, her noble mind was prodigal of itself, happy in scattering sweet approvals about her. One has said of Madame de Beaumont that she loved merit as others love beauty. When M. de Chateaubriand, coming to Paris, was presented to her, she immediately recognized that merit under its most seductive form of poetry, and she adored it. Hers was, after his sister Lucille's, the first great devotion which that figure of René inspired—that figure which was to inspire more than one other afterward, though none of greater value. With what feeling she inspired M. Joubert, it would be difficult to define: it was an active, tender, perpetual solicitude, without excitement, without uneasiness, full of warmth, full of radiance. That too lofty spirit, which knew not how to move slowly, loved to fly and perch itself near her. He had, as he said, a chilly mind; he loved to have it pleasant and warm about him; he found in her society the serenity and the warmth of affection, which he desired, and he drew strength from the indulgence. As she despised life, he preached to her constantly upon the care and love of it; he would have had her learn again to hope. He wrote to her:

> I am paid for desiring your health, since I have seen you; I know its importance, since I have it not. That, you say, will be the sooner done with. Yes, sooner, but not soon. One is a long time dying, and if, roughly speaking, it is sometimes agreeable to be dead, it is frightful to be dying for ages. Finally, we must love life while we have it: it is a duty.

He repeats to her this truth of morality and of friendship in all its forms; he wished, if possible, to lessen and to moderate the activity which was consuming her and wasting her frail organs. He wished to insinuate Madame de La Fayette's sentiment of resignation: *It is enough to be.*

> Be quiet in love, in esteem, in veneration, I pray you with joined hands. It is, I assure you, at this moment the only way to commit but few mistakes, to adopt but few errors, to suffer but few ills.

To live, he said to her again,

> is to think and to be conscious of one's soul; all the rest, eating, drinking, etc., although I value them, are but preparations for living, the means of preserving life. If one could do without them, I could easily resign myself thereto, and I could very well dispense with my body, if one would leave me all my soul.

He had reasons for speaking thus, he of whom one has said that he had the appearance of a soul which has encountered a body by chance, and which gets along with it as it can. He commended to that lovely friend repose, immobility, that she should follow the only regimen which he found good for himself—to remain a long time in bed and to *count the joists*. He added:

> Your activity disdains such a happiness; but see if your reason does not approve of it. Life is a duty; we must make a pleasure of it, so far as we can, as of all other duties. If the care of cherishing it is the only one with which it pleases Heaven to charge us, we must acquit ourselves gaily and with the best possible grace, and poke that sacred fire, while warming ourselves by it all we can, till the word comes to us: *That will do.*

These tender recommendations were useless. Madame de Beaumont had so little attachment to life, that it seemed as if it depended only upon herself whether she should live. Pure illusion! she was but too really attacked, and she herself had but little to do to hasten her end. She decided to go to the waters of Mont-Doré in the summer of 1803, and thence to set out for Rome, where she rejoined M. de Chateaubriand; shortly after her arrival there she died. One should read the letter of M. Joubert, written during that trip to Rome. He had not believed in that departure; he had secretly hoped that she would shrink from so much fatigue and such occasions of exhaustion. The last letter which he addressed to her (October 12, 1803,) is filled with an anxious tenderness; one perceives in it a kind of revelation, long withheld, which he finally made to himself; he had never before confessed to himself, so plainly, how much he loved her, how necessary she was to him. He wrote:

> All my mind has returned to me; it gives me many pleasures; but a despairing reflection corrupts them; I have you no longer, and surely I shall not have you for a long time within reach, to hear what I think. The pleasure I formerly had in speaking is entirely lost to me. I have made a vow of silence; I remain here for the winter. My inner life is going to be spent wholly with (*entre*) Heaven and myself. My soul will preserve its wonted habits, but I have lost its delights.

In conclusion, he cries:

> Adieu, adieu, cause of so many pains, who hast been for me so often the source of so many blessings. Adieu! preserve yourself, take care of your-

self, and return some day among us, if only to give me for a single moment the inexpressible pleasure of seeing you again.

In the preceding years (1800-1803) there had been formed about Madame de Beaumont a little *réunion,* often spoken of, which was very short in duration, but which had life and activity, and which deserves to hold a place by itself in literary history. It was the hour when society was everywhere regenerated, and many *salons* then offered to those who had recently been exiled and shipwrecked the enjoyments, so desired, of conversation and intellectual intercourse. There were the philosophic and literary circles of Madame Suard and Madame d'Houdetot, and that of the Abbé Morellet (held by his niece, Madame Chéron); there, properly speaking, literary people and philosophers held sway, who directly prolonged the last century. There were the fashionable *salons,* of a more varied and diverse composition; the *salon* of Madame de la Briche; that of Madame de Vergennes, where her daughter, Madame de Rémusat, distinguished herself; that of Madame de Pastoret, that of Madame de Staël when she was at Paris; and yet others, of which each had its hue and its dominant tone. But, in a corner of Neuve-du-Luxembourg street, a *salon* much less visible, much less exposed, gathered together some friends in intimate union about a lady of superior quality. In that place were to be found youth, the new sentiment, and the future. The *habitués* of the place were M. de Chateaubriand, even his sister Lucille for a whole winter, M. Joubert, Fontanes, M. Molé, M. Pasquier, Chênedollé, M. Greneau de Mussy, one M. Jullien, well instructed in English literature, Madame de Vintimille. These were the body of the assemblage: the others whom one might name came only as it happened. The sunstroke which followed the eighteenth *brumaire* had made itself felt more in this corner of the world than elsewhere; one loved, one adopted with pleasure every kind of genius, every new talent; one enjoyed them as enchanters; imagination had flowered again, and one might have inscribed on the door of the place the saying of M. Joubert: "Admiration has reappeared, and rejoiced a saddened earth."

These happy meetings, these complete reunions here below, last but a day. After the loss of Madame de Beaumont, M. Joubert continued to live and to think, but with less delight; he conversed often of her with Madame de Vintimille, the best female friend whom she had left; but such a reunion as that of 1802 was never formed again, and, at the end of the Empire, politics and business had loosened, if not dissolved, the ties of the principal friends. M. Joubert, isolated, living with his books, with his dreams, noting his thoughts on unconnected bits of paper, would have died without leaving anything finished or enduring, if one of the relatives of the family, M. Paul Raynal, had not had the pious care to collect these fragments, to set them in a

certain order, and to make of them a kind of series of precious stones. These are the volumes of which a second edition is published to-day.

Since I have spoken of precious stones, I will say, right at the beginning, that there are too many of them. An English poet (Cowley) has said: "One concludes by doubting whether the milky-way is composed of stars, there are so many of them!" There are too many stars in the heaven of M. Joubert. One would like more intervening spaces and more repose. "I am like Montaigne," said he, "unfit for continuous discourse. Upon all subjects, it seems to me, I either lack intermediate ideas, or they weary me too much." These intermediate ideas, if he had given himself the trouble to express them, would not have wearied us, it seems, but would rather have given us repose in reading him. One is conscious in his writings of an effort—often happy, yet an effort. "If there is a man," he says, "tormented with the accursed ambition of putting a whole book into a page, a whole page into a phrase, and that phrase into a word, it is I." His method is always to express a thought in an image; the thought and the image make, for him, but one thing, and he believes that he has grasped the one only when he has found the other. "It is not my phrase that I polish, but my idea. I stop till the drop of light which I need is formed and falls from my pen." This series of thoughts, then, are only drops of light; the mind's eye is at last dazzled by them. "I would like," says he, defining himself with marvellous correctness, "I would like to infuse exquisite sense into common sense, or to render exquisite sense common." Good sense alone wearies him; the ingenious without good sense rightly appears to him contemptible; he wishes to unite the two, and it is no small undertaking. "Oh! how difficult it is," he cries, "to be at once ingenious and sensible!" La Bruyère, before him, had felt the same difficulty, and had avowed it to himself at the beginning: "All is said, and one comes too late, now that there have been men for seven thousand years, and men, too, that have thought." M. Joubert recognizes this likewise: "All the things which are easy to say well have been perfectly said; the rest is our business or our task: painful task!" I indicate at the outset the disadvantage and the fault; these books of maxims and of condensed moral observations, such as that of La Bruyère, and especially such as M. Joubert's, cannot be read consecutively without fatigue. It is the mind distilled and fixed in all its sugar; one cannot take much of it at once.

The first chapters of the first volume are not those which please me most; they treat of God, of creation, of eternity, and of many other things. To the peculiar difficulty of the subjects is added that which springs from the subtlety of the author. Here it is no longer with Plato that we have to do, but with Augustine in large doses, and without any connexion in the ideas. Unquestionably it will be well, one day, to make of all these metaphysical chapters a single one, much

abridged, into which shall be admitted only the beautiful, simple, acceptable thoughts, rejecting all those which are equivocal or enigmatical. On these terms one may make of M. Joubert's volumes, not a library book as to-day, but (that which would be so easy to make by selection) one of those beautiful little books which he loved, and which would justify in every respect his device: *Excel, and thou shalt live!*

It is when he returns to speak of manners and of arts, of antiquity and of the century, of poetry and of criticism, of style and of taste—it is in treating all these subjects that he pleases and charms us, that he appears to us to have made a notable and novel addition to the treasure of his most excellent predecessors. Taste, for him, is *the literary conscience of the soul.* Not more than Montaigne does he love the book-like or bookish style (*style librier ou libresque*), that which savours of ink, and which one never employs except when writing: "There should be, in our written language, voice, soul, space, a majestic air, words that subsist all alone, and which carry their place with them." This life which he demands of the author, and without which style exists only on paper he wishes also in the reader: "The writers who have influence are only men who express perfectly what others think, and who reveal in minds ideas or sentiments that were striving to come forth. It is in the depths of minds that literatures exist." Again, he who relished the ancients so well, the antiquity of Rome, of Greece, and of Louis XIV, does not demand impossibilities of us; he will tell us to appreciate that antiquity, but not to return to it. In respect to expression, he prefers again the sincere to the beautiful, and truth to appearance:

> Truth in style is an indispensable quality, and one which suffices to recommend a writer. If, upon all sorts of subjects, we should write to-day as men wrote in the time of Louis XIV, we should have no truth in style, for we have no longer the same dispositions, the same opinions, the same manners. A woman who would write like Madame de Sévigné would be ridiculous, because she is not Madame de Sévigné. The more the way in which one writes partakes of the character of the man, of the manners of the time, the more must the style differ from that of the writers who have been models only by having manifested pre-eminently, in their works, either the manners of their epoch or their own character. Good taste itself, in that case, permits one to discard the best taste, for taste, even good taste, changes with manners.

If this is already the case, so far as we are concerned, with the style of the age of Louis XIV, how will it be with that of remote antiquity, and can one hope to return to it? M. Joubert contents himself with desiring that we should prize and tenderly regret that which will never return:

> In the luxury of our writings and of our life, let us at least love and regret that simplicity which we have no longer, and which, perhaps, we can no longer have. While drinking from our gold, let us regret the

ancient cups. Finally, that we may not be corrupted in everything, let us cherish that which is better than ourselves, and let us, in perishing, save from the shipwreck our tastes and our judgments.

What M. Joubert demands, above all, of the moderns, is, not to insist upon their faults, not to follow their inclinations, not to throw themselves in that direction with all their strength. The visionary and fickle nature, the sensual, the bombastic, the colossal, especially displease him. We have had a high opinion for some years of what we call force, power. Often when I have chanced to hazard some critical remark upon a talent of the day, one has replied to me: "What matters it! that talent has power." But what kind of power? Joubert is going to reply for me: "Force is not energy; some authors have more muscles than talent. Force! I do not hate it nor do I fear it; but, thanks to Heaven, I am entirely disabused in regard to it. It is a quality which is praiseworthy only when it is concealed or clothed. In the vulgar sense Lucan had more of it than Plato, Brebeuf more than Racine." He will tell us again: "Where there is no delicacy, there is no literature. A writing in which are found only force and a certain fire without splendour, announces only character. One may produce many such, if he has nerves, bile, blood, and boldness." M. Joubert adores enthusiasm, but he distinguishes it from explosiveness, and even from fervour (*verve*), which is but a secondary quality in inspiration, and which *excites* (*remue*) whilst the other *moves* (*émeut*): "Boileau, Horace, Aristophanes, had fervour; La Fontaine, Menander, and Virgil, the gentlest and the most exquisite enthusiasm that ever was." Enthusiasm, in that sense, might be defined a kind of *exalted peace*. Fine works, according to him, do not intoxicate, but they enchant. He exacts agreeableness and a certain amenity even in the treatment of austere subjects; he requires a certain charm everywhere, even in profundity: "It is necessary to carry a certain charm even into the deepest investigations, and to introduce into those gloomy caverns, into which one has penetrated but for a short time, the pure and antique light of the ages that were less instructed but more luminous than ours." Those words *luminous* and *light* reappear frequently in his writings, and betray that winged nature that loved the heavens and high places. The brilliant, which he distinguishes from the luminous, does not seduce him: "It is very well that thoughts should shine, but it is not necessary that they should sparkle." What he most of all desires in them is splendour, which he defines a quiet, inner brilliancy, uniformly diffused, and which penetrates the whole body of a work.

There is much to be drawn from the chapters of M. Joubert upon criticism and upon style—from the judgments upon different writers; in these he appears original, bold, and almost always correct. He astonishes at the first impression; he generally satisfies when one reflects upon his sayings. He has the art of freshening stale precepts, of renew-

ing them for the use of an epoch which holds to tradition only by halves. On this side he is essentially a modern critic. In spite of all his old creeds and his regrets for the past, we distinguish immediately in him the stamp of the time in which he lives. He does not hate a certain appearance of elaborate finish, and sees in it rather a misfortune than a fault. He goes so far as to believe that "it is permissible to avoid simplicity, when to do so is absolutely necessary for agreeableness, and when simplicity alone would not be beautiful." If he desires naturalness, it is not the vulgar naturalness, but an exquisite naturalness. Does he always attain it? He feels that he is not exempt from some subtlety, and he excuses himself for it: "Often one cannot avoid passing through the subtle to rise and reach the sublime, as to mount to the heavens one must pass through the clouds." He rises often to the highest ideas, but it is never by following the high-roads; he has paths that are unseen. Finally, to sum all up, there is singularity and an individual humour in his judgments. He is an indulgent humorist who sometimes recalls Sterne, or rather Charles Lamb. He has a manner that leads him to say nothing, absolutely nothing, like another man. This is noticeable in the letters he writes, and does not fail to be wearisome at last. It appears by all marks that Joubert is not a classic but a modern, and it is by this title that he appears to me fitted, better perhaps than any other person, to give emphasis to good counsel, and to pierce us with his shafts.

I have sometimes asked myself what would be a sensible, just, natural French rhetoric, and it happened to me, once in my life, to have to treat the subject in a course of lectures to some young people. What did I have to do to avoid falling into routine, and also risking too much by novelty? I began quite simply with Pascal, with the "thoughts" on literature, in which the great writer has set down some of the observations which he made upon his own art; I read them aloud, at the same time commenting on them. Then I took La Bruyère, at the chapter on the *Works of the Mind*. I next went to Fénelon, for his *Dialogues of Eloquence*, and for his *Letter to the French Academy*. I read cursorily, choosing the points, and commenting on them always by means of examples, and without confining myself to the living. Vauvenargues, on account of his *Thoughts* and his *Literary Characters*, came next. I then borrowed of Voltaire his articles on *Taste* and *Style* in the *Philosophical Dictionary*, his *Temple of Taste*, and some passages of his letters in which he judges Boileau, Racine, and Corneille. In order to extend the horizon a little at this moment, I joined some considerations upon the genius of Goethe and upon the English taste of Coleridge. Marmontel, in his *Elements of Literature*, furnished me next with the article on *Style*, an excellent piece. I was careful not to forget Buffon upon the same subject, who crowned the whole. Then, the classic circle completed, I gave M. Joubert to my young people for

a kind of dessert, for recreation, and for a little final debauch, a debauch worthy of Pythagoras! And so my French rhetoric found itself complete.

On the whole, if we must characterize M. Joubert, he had all the delicacy which one can desire in a mind, but he had not all the power. He was one of those meditative and fastidious minds that "are incessantly distracted from their work by immense perspectives and distant prospects of celestial beauty of which they would like to show everywhere some image or some ray." He had in too high a degree the sentiment of the perfect and of the complete: "To perfect one's thought," cried he, "that takes time, that is rare, that imparts an extreme pleasure; for perfected thoughts enter minds easily; they need not even be beautiful to please, it suffices that they be finished. The condition of the soul which has had them communicates itself to other souls, and conveys to them its own repose." He had sometimes that sweet enjoyment of finishing his thoughts, but never that of joining them together and forming a monument.

A philosopher of that time, himself an exceedingly intellectual man, was accustomed to distinguish three kinds of minds thus:

> The first, at once powerful and delicate, which excel as they understand it, execute what they conceive, and attain both the great and the true beautiful; a rare elect among mortals!
>
> The second, whose chief quality is delicacy, and who feel their idea to be superior to their execution, their intelligence greater still than their talent, even when this last is very real. They are easily disgusted, disdain the easily obtained suffrages, love better to judge, to taste, and to abstain, than to remain below their idea and themselves. When they write, it is in fragments, it is for themselves alone, it is at long intervals, and in rare moments; they have for their apportionment only an internal fecundity, which has few confidants.
>
> Finally, the last kind of minds comprises those who, more powerful and less delicate or less exacting, go on producing and diffusing themselves, without being too much disgusted with themselves and with their works; and it is very happy that it is so with them; for, otherwise, the world would run the risk of being deprived of many thoughts which amuse and which charm it, which console it for the want of those greater ones that will not come.

Is it necessary to say that M. Joubert, like M. Royer-Collard, belongs to the second class of these minds, to those who look upward and produce chiefly within?

Naturally the conversation of these men is superior to what they leave in writing, and which exhibits but the smallest part of themselves. I have been permitted to gather some flashes of the conversation of M. Joubert from the papers of Chênedollé, who took notes of

them on leaving him. Would one know how Joubert talked about M. de Chateaubriand and about Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, while comparing the excellences of the two? The last week has been entirely consecrated to M. de Chateaubriand, and there has been a great festival of eloquence on his account.[1] Nevertheless, if I do not deceive myself, and if I see clearly in respect to certain symptoms, the moment is approaching when his high renown will have to undergo one of those general insurrections which long-continued monarchies, universal monarchies, at the final reckoning, never escape. What it will be necessary to do then, to maintain the just rights of his renown, will be, in wise criticism as in wise war, to abandon without difficulty all the parts of that vast domain which are not truly beautiful, nor susceptible of being seriously defended, and to entrench one's self in the portions which are entirely superior and durable. These portions which I call truly beautiful and inexpugnable, will be *René,* some scenes of *Atala,* the story of Eudore, the picture of the Roman Campagna, some fine pictures in the *Itinéraire;* to these will be joined some political and especially some polemical pages. Well, here is what M. Joubert said, one day in February, 1807, while walking with Chênedollé before the column of the Louvre, as *René, Paul et Virginie,* and *Atala* came to his recollection:

> The work of M. de Saint-Pierre resembles a statue of white marble, that of M. de Chateaubriand a bronze statue cast by Lysippus. The style of the former is more polished, that of the latter more coloured. Chateaubriand takes for his theme heaven, earth, and hell: Saint-Pierre chooses a well-lighted earth. The style of the one has the fresher and younger look; that of the other has the more ancient look: it has the appearance of belonging to all times. Saint-Pierre seems to choose the purest and richest terms in the language: Chateaubriand borrows from all sources, even vicious literatures, but he works a real transmutation, and his style resembles that famous metal which, at the burning of Corinth, was formed by the mingling of all the other metals. The one has a varied unity, the other a rich variety.
>
> There is a reproach to be made against both. M. de Saint-Pierre has given to matter a beauty which does not belong to it; Chateaubriand has given to the passions an innocence which they do not have, or which they have but once. In *Atala* the passions are covered with long white veils.
>
> Saint-Pierre has but one line of beauty which turns and returns indefinitely upon itself, and is lost in the most graceful windings: Chateaubriand employs all the lines, even the defective ones, the breaks of which he makes contribute to the truth of the details and to the pomp of the whole.
>
> Chateaubriand produces with fire; he melts all his thoughts in the fire of heaven.
>
> Bernardin writes by moonlight, Chateaubriand by the light of the sun.

[1] On the sixth of December (1849) there was a great session at the French Academy for the reception of M. Noailles, who came to replace and to celebrate M. de Chateaubriand; M. Patin had replied to him.

I will add nothing after such thoughts so worthy of memory, except that, when a new edition of M. Joubert is prepared, they should be added to it.

December 10, 1849

* * *

HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL

AMIEL was born in Geneva in 1821 and spent his life there. He was a man of one book, the *Journal Intime*, in which he revealed his inner life, laying bare the reasons for his own melancholy and unproductiveness. Amiel's life may have been in some respects very narrow but nothing of this is reflected in the outlook and critical judgments of his *Journal*. He died in 1881.

The following extract is taken from Mrs. Humphry Ward's translation of the *Journal Intime* by permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

OF LOVE

HOW shall I find a name for that subtle feeling which seized hold upon me this morning in the twilight of waking? It was a reminiscence, charming, indeed, but nameless, vague, and featureless, like the figure of a woman seen for an instant by a sick man in the uncertainty of delirium, and across the shadows of his darkened room. I had a distinct sense of a form which I had seen somewhere, and which had moved and charmed me once, and then had fallen back with time into the catacombs of oblivion. But all the rest was confused: place, occasion, and the figure itself, for I saw neither the face nor its expression. The whole was like a fluttering veil under which the enigma—the secret, of happiness—might have been hidden. And I was awake enough to be sure that it was not a dream.

In impressions like these we recognize the last trace of things which are sinking out of sight and call within us, of memories which are perishing. It is like a shimmering marsh-light falling upon some vague outline of which one scarcely knows whether it represents a pain or a pleasure—a gleam upon a grave. How strange! One might almost call such things the ghosts of the soul, reflections of past happiness, the *manes* of our dead emotions. If, as the Talmud, I think, says, every feeling of love gives birth involuntarily to an invisible genius or spirit which yearns to complete its existence, and these glimmering phantoms, which have never taken to themselves form and reality, are still wandering in the limbo of the soul, what is there to astonish us in

the strange apparitions which sometimes come to visit our pillow? At any rate, the fact remains that I was not able to force the phantom to tell me its name, nor to give any shape or distinctness to my reminiscence.

What a melancholy aspect life may wear to us when we are floating down the current of such dreamy thoughts as these! It seems like some vast nocturnal shipwreck in which a hundred loving voices are clamouring for help, while the pitiless mounting wave is silencing all the cries one by one, before we have been able, in this darkness of death, to press a hand or give the farewell kiss. From such a point of view destiny looks harsh, savage, and cruel, and the tragedy of life rises like a rock in the midst of the dull waters of daily triviality. It is impossible not to be serious under the weight of indefinable anxiety produced in us by such a spectacle. The surface of things may be smiling or commonplace, but the depths below are austere and terrible. As soon as we touch upon eternal things, upon the destiny of the soul, upon truth or duty, upon the secrets of life and death, we become grave whether we will or no.

Love at its highest point—love sublime, unique, invincible—leads us straight to the brink of the great abyss, for it speaks to us directly of the infinite and of eternity. It is eminently religious: it may even become religion. When all around a man is wavering and changing—when everything is growing dark and featureless to him in the far distance of an unknown future—when the world seems but a fiction or a fairy-tale, and the universe a chimera—when the whole edifice of ideas vanishes in smoke, and all realities are penetrated with doubt—what is the fixed point which may still be his? The faithful heart of a woman! There he may rest his head; there he will find strength to live, strength to believe, and, if need be, strength to die in peace with a benediction on his lips. Who knows if love and its beatitude, clear manifestation as it is of the universal harmony of things, is not the best demonstration of a fatherly and understanding God, just as it is the shortest road by which to reach Him? Love is a faith, and one faith leads to another. And this faith is happiness, light, and force. Only by it does a man enter into the series of the living, the awakened, the happy, the redeemed—of those true men who know the value of existence and who labour for the glory of God and of the Truth. Till then we are but babblers and chatterers, spendthrifts of our time, our faculties, and our gifts, without aim, without real joy—weak, infirm, and useless beings, of no account in the scheme of things. Perhaps it is through love that I shall find my way back to faith, to religion, to energy, to concentration. It seems to me, at least, that if I could but find my work-fellow and my destined companion, all the rest would be added unto me, as though to confound my unbelief and

make me blush for my despair. Believe, then, in a fatherly Providence, and dare to love!

* * *

ALPHONSE DAUDET

DAUDET is one of those rare writers who is able to inspire in his readers a feeling of personal affection. All his work is characterized by a peculiar charm and a sure touch which makes it truly individual. He was born at Nîmes in 1840. After a painful period spent as usher in a small school he joined his brother in Paris and began to write in earnest. His first really successful book was the *Lettres de mon Moulin*. Others of note are autobiographical *Le Petit Chose*, *Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné*, *Jack*, *Le Nabab*, *Contes du Lundi*, *Les Rois en Exil*, *L'Immortel*, *L'Evangéliste*, *Sapho*, *Tartarin de Tarascon*, and *Tartarin sur les Alpes*. Daudet died in 1897.

The following essay is taken, by permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., from *Thirty Years of Paris and of My Literary Life*, translated by Laura Ensor.

SPARROW ISLAND

A MEETING ON THE SEINE

AT THAT time I did not suffer from rheumatism, and for six months of the year I worked in my boat. It was on a lovely bend of the river, about thirty miles above Paris, where the Seine is provincial, countrified, and fresh, where reeds and rushes, iris and water-lily, encroach upon its waters, and tufts of long grass and roots float about, on which the water wagtails, tired by flight, abandon themselves to the course of the stream. On the slopes of each bank, cornfields, squares of vineyards; here and there a few green islands dotted about—l'île des Paveurs, l'île des Moineaux—this last quite small, a mere nosegay of brambles and straggling branches, which had become my favourite mooring-place. I used to push my dinghy between the reeds, and when the soft rustling of the long slight canes had ceased and my wall was well closed in around me, I found myself in a tiny harbour of clearest water, hollowed under the shade of an old willow which served me as a study, the two oars crossed before me making a desk. I loved the smell of the river, the hum of the insects among the rushes, the murmur of the long quivering leaves, all that mysterious, infinite agitation which the silence of man awakes in nature! To how vast a multitude this silence brings happiness! To what millions of little beings is it reassur-

ing! My islet was more populous than Paris. I heard busy creatures hunting and ferreting beneath the grass, the flight of birds pursuing each other through the branches, the shaking of damp feathers spread out to dry. No one paid any attention to me; they took me for an old willow. The black dragon-flies shot by under my nose, the water-flies bespattered me in their luminous leaps, the swallows came to drink actually beneath the oars.

One day, on penetrating into my island, I found my solitude invaded by a yellow beard and a straw hat. That was all I beheld at first—a yellow beard and a straw hat. The intruder was not fishing; he lay at full length in his boat, his oars crossed like mine. He was working too, working in my study! At first sight both our faces expressed the same feeling of annoyance. Nevertheless we bowed. There was no help for it; the shadow cast by the willow was limited and our two boats touched. As he did not appear inclined to go away I settled myself without saying a word, but this hat with a beard to it so near to me disturbed my train of thought. Probably I too embarrassed him. Inaction made us speak. My boat was called *L'Arlésienne,* and the name of Georges Bizet served at once as a point of contact.

"You know Bizet? Are you by chance an artist?" The beard smiled and replied modestly,

"Sir, I am in the musical line."

Generally speaking, literary people have a horror of music. Gautier's opinion on "the most disagreeable of all noises" is well known; Leconte de Lisle and Banville share it. The moment a piano is opened Goncourt frowns. Zola has a vague impression that he once, in his youth, played some instrument, he no longer remembers what it was. That excellent Flaubert pretended to be a great musician, but it was only to please Tourguéneff, who in reality never cared for any music but that heard at the Viardots. As for me I love every kind madly—the classic, the simple, Beethoven, Gluck and Chopin, Massenet and Saint-Saëns, the *bamboula,* the *Faust* of Gounod and that of Berlioz, popular songs, grinding organs, the tambourine, and even bells. Music that dances, music that dreams, all speak to me, all awake an answering chord within me. The Wagnerian chant seizes me, envelops me, hypnotizes me like the sea; and the wild strains of the Tziganes prevented me from seeing the Exhibition. Every time those confounded violins caught me as I passed along, it was impossible to go further. There I must remain till evening with a glass of Hungarian wine before me, a choking in the throat, eyes staring, and my whole body quivering to the nervous beat of the dulcimer.

This musician falling upon my islet won my heart. His name was Léon Pillaut. He had wit, ideas, a pretty imagination; we suited each other at once. Started by nearly the same things, our paradoxes made

common cause. From this day, my island belonged to him as much as to me; and as his boat, a Norwegian craft without a keel, rolled horribly, he got into the habit of coming to talk of music in mine. His book—*Instruments et Musiciens,* which caused him to be named Professor at the Conservatoire—was already running in his head, and he used to relate it to me. We lived that book together.

I read between the lines of it the pleasant intimacy of our gossip, just as I used to see the Seine dancing between my reeds. Pillaut set forth to me absolutely new views upon his art. A talented musician, brought up in the country, his trained and delicate ear retained and noted all the varied sounds of nature; he heard as a landscape-painter sees. For him every flutter of wings gave its particular thrill. The confused hum of insects, the dry rattle of autumn leaves, the babbling of the brooks over the pebbles, the wind, the rain, far-off voices, the distant rumble of the train, wheels creaking in the ruts—all this country life and being may be found in his book. And many other things too—ingenious criticisms, a pleasant and erratic erudition, the poetical biography of the orchestra and all instruments, from the amorous viola to the Saxony horn—all related for the first time. We talked of it beneath our willow or in some inn by the riverside, while we drank the muddy white wine of the year's vintage, and split a herring on the edge of a chipped plate in the midst of quarrymen and mariners; we talked of it as we pulled the oar, exploring the Seine and the unknown streamlets which fall into it.

Oh! what expeditions we made upon the pretty *Orge,* dappled with light, black with shade, tangled with scented cords of briar and climbers, as a brooklet of the tropics! We went straight on without knowing whither. Sometimes for a moment we passed between civilized lawns, whereon a white peacock trailed his tail, and bright-coloured dresses gleamed like flowers. A picture by Nittis. In the background, the house, all radiant with its galaxy of beauty, was shadowed by thick and lofty foliage, from which trilled forth the sonorous roulades and cheerful twittering of those cage birds kept by the rich. Further on we found again the wild flowers of our island, the straggling branches, the twisted and gnarled grey willows; or else some old windmill, tall as a round tower, with its moss-grown gallery, great walls with irregular loop-holes, and on the roof a crowd of pigeons and guinea fowl, amongst whom was a continual shiver and rustle of wings which seemed to be put in movement by the heavy machinery. Then came the return downstream with the current, singing old ditties! The screech of the peacock resounded on the deserted lawns; in the middle of a grass field stood the little cart of the shepherd, who was collecting his beasts from a distance to fold them for the night. We disturbed the kingfisher, the blue bird of the little streams; we bent ourselves double at the mouth of

the *Orge* to pass beneath the low arch of the bridge, and then all at once the Seine opening out before us in the rolling mists, gave us the impression of the open sea.

Amid so many charming wanderings one above all is imprinted on my mind—an autumn breakfast at an inn by the waterside. I see again the chilly morning, the leaden, melancholy Seine, the landscape beautiful in its stillness, while low over the land lay a penetrating mist, which made us turn up the collars of our coats. The inn was a little above the lock at Coudray, an old posting-house, where the inhabitants of Corbeil are wont to spend a joyous Sunday, but which, out of the season, is only frequented by the people who use the lock—crews of the barges and tugs. At that moment the soup was smoking hot, ready for the passing of the gang. What a delicious puff of hot scent greeted us on entering. "And what after the beef, gentlemen? How would a stewed tench suit you?" That tench was exquisite, served up on a coarse earthenware plate in a little parlour, the wall-paper of which had a pleasant air of bourgeois merry-making about it. The meal finished and pipes lighted, we began to talk of Mozart. It was truly an autumn conversation. Outside on the little terrace in front of the inn I could see through the leafless arbours a swing, painted green, a game of *tonneau*, the targets of a crossbow shooting-gallery, all shivering in the teeth of a cold wind off the Seine, and wearing the air of mournful sadness peculiar to abandoned pleasure haunts. "Ah, a spinet!" said my companion, lifting the dusty cover of a long table covered with plates. He tried the instrument, drew from it a few cracked and bleating sounds, and till evening closed we bemused ourselves delightfully with Mozart.

* * *

ANATOLE FRANCE

Jacques Anatole Thibault, who assumed the name of Anatole France, was born in 1844. All his books, whether novels, short stories, or essays, are vehicles for his ideas. He reveres no conventions, he accepts no law; his sole regard is for beauty. Against all the pretensions of mankind, whether they are labelled theology, metaphysics, or science, he directs his irony reinforced by wide learning and a subtle skill in argument. But there is always present to temper his satire a wise tolerance and a touch of tenderness. The long list of his works includes the *Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*, *Thais*, *Le Lys Rouge*, *Les Dieux ont Soif*, *La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*, and *L'Ile des Pingouins*. Anatole France died in 1924.

The following esssay is taken, by permission of Messrs. John Lane the Bodley Head Ltd., and Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., from *On Life and Letters*, translated by A. W. Evans.

HAMLET AT THE COMÉDIE-FRANÇAISE

"GOOD NIGHT, sweet prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" That is what, on Tuesday, at midnight, we said with Horatio to Young Hamlet, as we were leaving the Théâtre-Français. And, surely, we ought to wish a good night to him who had caused us to pass so delightful an evening. Yes, Prince Hamlet is a sweet prince. He is handsome and he is unhappy; he knows everything and he can do nothing. He is to be envied and to be pitied. He is worse and better than any of us. He is a man, he is man, he is the whole of man. And there were, I swear to you, at least twenty persons in the house who had that feeling. "Good night, sweet prince!" we cannot leave you without having our heads full of you, and for the last three days I have had no other thoughts than yours.

I felt, when I saw you, a sad joy, my Prince. And that is more than a joyous joy. I will whisper to you that the house seemed to me just a little heedless and frivolous; but we must not complain too much of that and we must not be at all astonished at it. It was a house made up of French men and French women. You were not in evening dress, you had no amorous intrigue in the world of high finance, and you did not wear a gardenia in your button-hole. That is why the ladies coughed a little, as they ate iced fruits in their boxes. Your adventures could not interest them. They are not fashionable adventures; they are only human adventures. You force people to think, and that is a wrong we will not pardon you here. However, there were here and there throughout the house some spirits whom you deeply moved. In speaking to them of yourself you spoke to them of themselves. That is why they prefer you to all the other beings who, like you, have been created by genius. A lucky chance placed me in the house beside M. Auguste Dorchain. He understands you, my Prince, just as he understands Racine, because he is a poet. I believe that I also understand you a little, because I have just come from the sea. . . . Oh! do not be afraid that I am going to say that you are two oceans. That is all words, words, and you do not care about words. No, I only mean that I understand you because, after two months of rest and quiet amidst wide horizons, I have become very simple and very accessible to what is truly beautiful, great, and profound. In our Paris, in winter, we readily acquire a taste for pretty things, for fashionable affectation, and the intricate refinements of the coteries. But one's perception is elevated and purified in the fruitful idleness of rural walks and amid the broad horizons of sea and fields. When we come back from them we are quite ready for intercourse with the wild genius of a Shakespeare. That is why you have been welcome, Prince Hamlet.

It is why all your thoughts wander confusedly upon my lips, and envelop me with terror, poetry, and sadness. You saw, of course, that in the *Revue bleue* and elsewhere the question of the origin of your melancholy has been raised. It has been judged to be so deep that even the most frightful domestic catastrophes were incapable of having formed it in all its extent. A very distinguished political economist, M. Émile de Laveleye, thinks that it must be the sadness of a political economist. And he has written an article with the sole object of proving this theory. He intimates that he and his friend, Lanfrey, experienced a similar melancholy after the *coup d'état* of 1851, and that you, Prince Hamlet, must have suffered, even more than they did, from the terrible condition to which the usurper Claudius had reduced the affairs of Denmark.

In truth, I believe that you were deeply concerned for the fate of your country, and I applaud the words used by Fortinbras when he commanded four captains to bear your body like a soldier to the stage. "Had Hamlet lived," he exclaimed, "he would have proved most royally." But I do not think your melancholy was quite that of M. Émile de Laveleye. I believe that it was nobler and more intelligent. I believe that it was inspired by a keen perception of destiny. Not Denmark only, but the whole world appeared gloomy to you. You had faith in nothing, not even, as M. de Laveleye has, in the principles of public law. Let those who doubt this recall the fine and bitter prayer which left your lips when already growing cold in death.

> O God! Horatio, what a wounded name,
> Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.
> If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
> Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
> To tell my story.

These were your last words. He to whom they were addressed had not, like you, a family poisoned by crimes; he was not, like you, an assassin. His was an unfettered, wise, and faithful nature. He was a happy man, if such there be. But you, Prince Hamlet, knew that there never was one. You knew that all is evil in the universe. We must out with it, you were a pessimist. Doubtless, your destiny drove you to despair; it was tragic. But your nature was consonant with your destiny. That is what renders you so admirable; you were formed to taste misfortune, and you had full opportunity for exercising your taste. You were well served, Prince. And how you relish the evil in which you are steeped! What subtlety of taste? Oh! you are a connoisseur, a *gourmet* in sufferings.

Of such a nature did the great Shakespeare give you birth. And it seems to me that he was hardly an optimist himself at the time he created you. From 1601 to 1608, he, with his enchanted hands, gave

life to what is, I think, a pretty large crowd of afflicted or violent shades. It was then that he showed Desdemona perishing through Iago, and the blood of a fatherly old king staining the little hands of Lady Macbeth, and poor Cordelia, and you, his favourite, and Timon of Athens.

Yes, even Timon! There is decided reason for believing that Shakespeare was a pessimist like you. What will his colleague, M. Moreau, the author of the second *Falcon,* say about it, he who, I am told, maltreats the poor pessimists so violently every evening at the Vaudeville. Oh! he gives them a bad quarter of an hour every day, I assure you. I pity them. There are, indeed, happy people everywhere who jest at them without pity. In their place I would not know where to hide myself. But Hamlet ought to give them courage. They have Job and Shakespeare on their side. That redresses the balance a little. So that M. Paul Bourget is saved this time. And it is you who have done it, Prince Hamlet.

I have under my eyes, as I write, an old German engraving, which represents you, but in which I can hardly recognize you. It represents you as you appeared in the Berlin theatre about 1780. You did not then wear that solemn mourning of which your mother speaks, that doublet, those hose, that mantle, that cap with which Delacroix so nobly clothed you when he fixed your type in his awkward but sublime drawings, and which M. Mounet-Sully wears with so virile a grace and so many poetic attitudes.

No! you appeared before the good people of Berlin in the eighteenth century in a costume which would seem very strange to us to-day. You were clad—my engraving proves it—in the latest French fashion. Your hair was elaborately dressed and powdered; you wore an embroidered collar, satin knee-breeches, silk stockings, buckled shoes, and a little mantle in the Court style, in short the whole mourning costume of the courtiers of Versailles. I was forgetting your Henri IV hat, the true hat of the nobility in the time of the States-General. Thus equipped, with your sword at your side, you lie at Ophelia's feet, Ophelia who, upon my word, is exceedingly pretty in her hooped gown and lofty head-dress *à la* Marie-Antoinette, which is surmounted by a great plume of ostrich feathers. All the other personages are dressed in a corresponding style. They are present with you, at the tragedy of Gonzaga and Baptista. Your beautiful Louis XV armchair is empty and we can see all the flowers of its upholstery. Already you creep on the ground, you spy on the king's face for the mute confession of the crime which you are charged to avenge. The king also wears, just as Louis XVI did, a splendid Henri IV hat. Perhaps you think that I am going to smile and to scoff, and to boast about the progress of our decorations and our costumes. You are mistaken. Most certainly, if you are no longer dressed in the fashion of my old print, and no longer

look like the Comte de Provence wearing mourning for the Dauphin, and if your Ophelia is no longer dressed like Mesdames, I do not regret it in the least. Far from that, I like you much better as you are now. But dress is nothing to you, you can wear any costume you please; they will all suit you if they are beautiful. You are of all times and of all countries. Your soul is of the same age as all our souls. We live together, Prince Hamlet, and you are what we are, a man in the midst of universal woe. Your words and your actions have been cavilled at. You have been shown to be inconsistent with yourself. How are we to understand this incomprehensible personage? So they have asked. He thinks in turns like a monk of the Middle Ages and like a scholar of the Renaissance; his mind is philosophic and yet it is full of impishness. He has a horror of lies and his life is only one long lie. He is irresolute, that is clear, and yet certain critics have pronounced him to be full of decision, and we cannot entirely contradict them. Lastly, my Prince, they have said that you were a warehouse of thoughts, a heap of contradictions, and not a human being. But that, on the contrary, is the sign of your profound humanity. You are prompt and slow, audacious and timid, kind and cruel; you believe and you doubt, you are wise and, above all, you are mad. In a word, you live. Which of us does not resemble you in something? Which of us thinks without contradictions and acts without incoherence? Which of us is not mad? Which of us may not say to you with a mixture of pity, sympathy, admiration, and horror: "Good night, sweet prince!"

* * *

ÉMILE FAGUET

Born in 1847 Émile Faguet became Professeur d'Eloquence Française at the Sorbonne. His critical work is contained in the five volumes of *Propos de Théâtre* the four volumes of *Études Littéraires*, and the three volumes of *Politiques et Moralistes du Dix-neuvieme Siècle*. He has a great reverence for Montesquieu, preferring him to his rival, Voltaire. His style is lucid and forceful.

This essay is taken from Beatrice Barstow's translation of *The Cult of Incompetence* by permission of the publishers, Messrs. John Murray and Messrs. E. P. Dutton and Co., who owns the copyright thereon.

MANNERS

IF THE worship of incompetence reverberates with a jarring note through our domestic morals, it has an effect hardly less harmful on the social relations of men in the wider theatre of public life. We

often ask why politeness is out of date, and every one replies with a smile: "This is democratic." So it is, but why should it be? Montesquieu remarks that "to cast off the conventions of civility is to seek a method for putting our faults at their ease." He adds the rather subtle distinction that "politeness flatters the vices of others, and civility prevents us from displaying our own. It is a barrier raised by men to prevent them from corrupting each other." That which flatters vice can hardly be called politeness, but is rather adulation. Civility and politeness are only slightly different in degree; civility is cold and very respectful, politeness has a suggestion of flattery. It graciously draws into evidence the good qualities of our neighbour, not his failings, much less his vices.

There is no doubt that civility and politeness are a delicate means of showing respect to our fellow-men, and of communicating a wish to be respected in turn. These things then are barriers, but barriers from which we derive support, which separate and strengthen us, but which, though holding us apart, do not keep us estranged from our neighbours.

It is also very true that if we release ourselves from these rules, whether they are civility or politeness, we set our faults at liberty. The basis of civility and politeness is respect for others and respect for ourselves. As Abbé Barthélemy has very justly remarked: "In the first class of citizens is to be found a spirit of decorum which makes it evident that men respect themselves, and a spirit of politeness which makes it evident that they also respect others." This is what Pascal meant by saying that respect is our own convenience, and he explains it thus, that to stand when our neighbour is seated, to remove our hat when he is covered, though trifling acts of courtesy, are tokens of the efforts we would willingly make on his behalf if an opportunity of being really serviceable to him presented itself.

Politeness is a mark of respect and a promise of devotion.

All this is anti-democratic, because democracy does not recognize any superiority, and therefore has no sympathy with respect and personal devotion. Respect to others involves a recognition from us that we are of less importance than they, and politeness to an equal requires from us a courteous affectation that we consider him as our superior. This is entirely contrary to the democratic ideal, which asserts that there is no superiority anywhere. As for pretending to treat your equal as though he were your superior that involves a double hypocrisy, because it requires a reciprocal hypocrisy on the part of your neighbour. You praise his wit, only in order that he may return the compliment.

Without, however, insisting on this point, democracy will argue that politeness is to be deprecated, because it not only recognizes but actually creates superiority. It treats an equal as a superior, as though there were not enough discrepancies already without inventing any more. It seems to imply that if inequality did not exist, it would be necessary

to invent it. It is tantamount to proclaiming that there cannot be too much aristocracy. That is an opinion which democracy cannot endure.

Considered as a promise of future devotion, politeness is equally anti-democratic. The citizen owes no devotion to any person, he owes it only to the community. It is no small matter to style yourself "your most humble servant"; it means that you single out one man from among many others and promise to serve him; it means that you acknowledge in him some natural or social superiority, and according to democracy there are no superiorities, social or natural, and if there were such a thing as natural superiority, nature has no business to allow it. This is tantamount to proclaiming a form of vassalage—a thing which is not to be tolerated.

As to the absence of politeness considered as "a means of giving free play to one's failings," we recognize that in one sense this also is essentially democratic. The democrat is not proud of or pleased with his faults; not at all; only *ex hypothesi* he does not believe in their existence. A failing is an inferiority of one man in relation to another; the word itself implies it; it means that something is lacking, that one man has a thing which another has not. But all men are equal, therefore, argues the democrat, I have no failing; therefore I need not try to conceal and control my alleged failings, as they are at worst merely mannerisms, and are possibly virtues.

The democrat, in fact, like young men, like most women, and like all human beings who have begun to think but do not think very profoundly, knows his failings and assumes that they are virtues. This is very natural, for our faults are the most conspicuous parts of our character, and when we are still at the self-satisfied stage it is our faults that we cherish and admire. Consequently, politeness, in that it consists in concealing our faults, is intolerable to a man who is impatient to display qualities that to him appear commendable and worthy. The usual reason why we do not correct our faults is that we mistake them for qualities, and think that any practice which requires their concealment must be quite absurdly tyrannical.

The democrat is therefore profoundly convinced of two things; first, that all men are equal and that there is no such thing as inferiority or failing, and secondly, that what men call faults are really natural characteristics of great interest. He believes that faults are popular prejudices invented by intriguers, priests, nobles, and rulers, for their own base purposes to inspire the poor with humility. He looks upon this sense of inferiority as a curb on the people's power, all the more potent that it works from within and has a paralysing effect on its energy. He is persuaded that, from this point of view, politeness is an aristocratic instrument of tyranny.

This explains why, when the wave of democracy swept over France, it brought with it a perfect frenzy of rudeness, all the more curious in

a nation remarkable for courtesy. It was an affirmation that, appearances notwithstanding, neither superiorities nor excellences of human character had any real existence.

Rudeness is democratic.

* * *

FERDINAND BRUNETIÈRE

Brunetière (1849-1906) is one of the greatest critics of the nineteenth century. After initial disappointments and the handicap of a delicate physique he entered the Ecole Normale and became a professor. In time he became editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and a member of the Academy. His chief work was the application to literature of the principles of evolution, and though there is in many quarters a tendency to minimize this, its significance cannot be disputed. Just as all life has evolved from an elementary form, so in literature the diverse forms that we have to-day have developed from a rudimentary form. In the introduction reference has been made to the process by which the essay has been evolved out of the maxim or proverb. It is to Brunetière that we owe this discovery and the light which is consequently cast upon literary origins. His works include *Etudes Critiques sur la Littérature Française*, *Evolution des Genres*, and the unfinished *Histoire de la Littérature Française Classique*.

The following essay is taken, by permission of Messrs. Ernest Benn, Ltd., from *Essays in French Literature*, translated by D. Nichol Smith.

AN APOLOGY FOR RHETORIC

IF, AS has been said, there are dead men who must be killed, are there not others from time to time who must be brought to life again, or have at least their memory revived? This is what I was thinking a short time ago while reading the invective of a worthy philosopher against rhetoric, and I asked myself if the time had not come to plead a little the cause of this illustrious victim. For though there is certainly one part of the art of writing which is divine and, as it were, inspired, and which, at once inimitable and incommunicable, is neither to be learned nor transmitted, are there not also humbler parts which can be taught and really have rules and theories? Surely nobody would dare to say that there is no art of singing. The most beautiful voice in the world is little in itself, if it cannot be used and controlled. Why should there not be also an art of speaking or writing? Because rhetoric has been abused, must we condemn its use or despise its utility —its value I shall soon be saying. And because some one has said that "true rhetoric laughs at rhetoric" must we take him at his word? Or

shall we hold with another that a man always writes well enough when he succeeds in making himself understood? In this case I do not know the kitchen-maid or stable-boy who does not succeed as well as an academician.

Yes, undoubtedly, if we never spoke but to act, if when we wrote we were guided only by interests superior to ourselves, interests which self-love has never tainted, if we thought only of instructing, or of gaining or converting souls, if we were Pascal—since I have just quoted from him—or Bossuet, or Bourdaloue only, then we could affect to despise rhetoric! We could throw far off its ornaments and artifices. We should have the right to despise, for our speech as for our person, "all that men admire." And yet, as to Pascal himself, why did he rewrite, even as often as seven or eight times, each one of his *Provinciales?* [1] And Bossuet, though more disinterested than Pascal, why did he rewrite his *Sermons*? Why did he revise so carefully the text of his *Oraisons funèbres* or his *Histoire universelle*? To make sure of its doctrine, I know, and grant; but also that the force of the words should make the ideas more sure of impressing the reader or listener. They did not need to despise rhetoric, for they indulged in it. And though they did not let it take up more place in their work than it should occupy, they indulged in it all the same. They knew "the power of a word put in its proper place": they knew also that of "harmonious cadence." As they dealt with men, they captivated them by human methods. Was that not better than estranging them at the outset, for as they had something they wished to tell, should they have begun by discouraging or disgusting them from listening? But how much more is that which is true of those men true of us, I mean of all those writers who are neither apostles nor leaders of souls, who write for their own pleasure perhaps, but also that they may be read, just as the painter aims at being looked at and the musician at being heard. Only those can I forgive for their contempt or disdain of rhetoric who do not print, and never have printed, and will not leave *Memoirs* behind them, who will in fact always keep from writing, even against rhetoric, since we have to use it as soon as we write.

It is true we must come to an understanding on the meaning of the very word *rhetoric*, and this is no easy matter, since it has been distorted from the old sense it still had at the time of Pascal and Bossuet to be

[1] As it is chiefly Pascal and his sayings that are cited against rhetoric, it may be well to reproduce a few lines from Nicole, in his *Histoire des Provinciales:* "This letter [the first] had all the success desired. . . . It produced in the minds of all the effect which was expected. *It showed how much the style of writing which Montalte had chosen was fitted to engage the attention of the world in this dispute.* It was plain that it forced in some way or other the dullest and the most indifferent to take an interest in it; *that it stirred them up, that it won them over by enjoyment;* and that, without aiming at giving them vain amusement, it led them pleasantly to the knowledge of the truth."

made a kind of literary insult. Further, we live at a time when every one takes the liberty of giving words whatever sense is convenient—without any thought on their signification, their history, or their origin. What is it, for example, that M. Ernest Renan meant to say in the preface to the third volume of his *History of the People of Israel,* when he rather bitterly reproached those who did not see the resemblance between Félix Pyat and the prophet Jeremiah which he finds so amusing with "their rhetoricians' susceptibility"? I suppose he only meant to be unpleasant, for what rhetoric can find a resemblance doubtful, a comparison bad, an allusion unfortunate, and say so very simply? Surely a man can have other ideas on the Prophets than those of M. Renan, and not be a "rhetorician" for that? But when M. Maxime Du Camp in his turn tells us in his *Théophile Gautier* that, along with the verses of Musset, those of Gautier are the only ones which are not "tainted with rhetoric," what meaning does he attach to it? And what should we? For I would have thought that there was no rhetoric at all, or very little, in *Jocelyn* and the *Destinées,* for example, in the verses of Lamartine and Vigny: but on the other hand I find much, and a good deal more than I would have wished for, in *Albertus* and *Rolla.*

> Regrettez-vous le temps où le ciel sur la terre,
> Marchait et respirait dans un peuple de dieux. . . .
>
> Dors-tu content, Voltaire, et ton hideux sourire
> Voltige-t-il encor sur tes os décharnés. . . .
>
> Cloîtres silencieux, voûtes des monastères,
> C'est vous, sombres caveaux, vous qui savez aimer. . . .

Who has ever made a greater abuse than Musset of the exclamation, and the apostrophe, and generally all the figures that are catalogued in the treatises of the rhetoricians? But as for Gautier, is it not amusing that anyone should wish to exempt at this day from the reproach of rhetoric him of all our contemporaries who believed most firmly in the power of words, in their peculiar and intrinsic value, exterior and superior to the ideas they express? For fear of losing ourselves among all these contradictions, let us hold by the old definitions, and take the word as it has always been taken from Aristotle to Fénelon. Rhetoric is the body of rules and laws which govern the art of writing, considered in itself as inseparable from the art of thinking: and whether it is known or not, and I rather fear it is not known very well, what one denies in attacking rhetoric is an art of thinking and writing.

In what does it consist? I shall take good care to be vague. I am sure to be asked if I am master of it myself. The joke, it is true, would mean nothing: but I prefer not to give too good occasion for it. Its rules and laws are to be found in all treatises on rhetoric, and Aristotle and Quintilian say some very good things about it, which are as true

for us as for the Greeks and Romans. But it will be most interesting perhaps to recall the principles of this art, or rather its reasons, the eternal and solid reasons which will always justify it. Not only is it not such a futile and puerile thing, as it is often said to be, to learn to write, but it is possible that it may be essential. Brought to birth at an early date, and almost contemporary in its origin with Greek literature, rhetoric should undoubtedly answer, and I believe it does, to some general interior and profound need of literature and humanity.

"We show too little esteem of the public if we do not take the trouble of preparation when dealing with it. And a man who would appear in a night-cap and a dressing-gown on a day of ceremony would not commit a greater incivility than he who exposes to the light of the world things which are good only in private or in conversations only with intimate friends or valets." So says Balzac somewhere, the other Balzac, the one whom Sainte-Beuve preferred for quite personal reasons—and who, as he has so well said, had actually made French prose learn its rhetoric. How many people would not write, if they were made, if they could be made, before writing, to think over this lesson of old politeness! How many *Memoirs* and *Journals* and *Confessions* would literature have the luck to be rid of, if we could distinguish for ourselves what is suitable only for our "intimate friends" and our "valets"—if we have them—and what is worth being exposed "to the light of the world"! This is the first principle of all rhetoric. A man writes and speaks for himself, but also for others, and assuredly we should neither sacrifice nor disguise for them what we believe to be justice and truth, but should present these in a manner which does not jar too rudely on their ears, their habits, or their prejudices. Is it not thus—I think it is worth the passing remark—that our classical literature has grown and developed? I refer no longer to Balzac. But we may be sure that the author of the *Provinciales,* had he not taken pains to win society at once to his side, would never have succeeded in insinuating into the minds of his time something of the severity of Jansenist morality. And in truth, the means he chose was excellent rhetoric, but it was rhetoric all the same.

Let us remember, in fact, that literature, like art in general, has really a function—I am tempted to say a social mission. This is the profound meaning of the ancient myths, which gave eloquence a place at the beginning of civilizations or even of societies. Do we not know, moreover, that if great peoples anywhere awake to a full consciousness of what they are, it is in their literature? And, divided as we are by all sorts of means, by our interests or our passions, is it not literature still that ever re-establishes a solidarity, which on the other hand the attraction of selfish pleasure and the hardness of the struggle for life perpetually tend to dissolve? An ode or an elegy, a drama or a novel, work only on the reader, if I may say so, according as they awaken or pro-

duce in him "states of mind" which are like those of the novelist or the dramatist or the poet. The knowledge of these states of mind, of their most general and human qualities, and consequently the art or science of the means to induce them, is what the ancient rhetoricians called the "topic." We may change the word if it is too Greek, too pedantic, too uncouth for us nowadays: but the thing remains the same. A little of the "topic" would have prevented Corneille from writing his *Théodore,* his *Pertharite,* or his *Attila.* It would prevent our contemporary novelists from taking particular and exceptional and morbid states of the human mind as ordinary and general states. At least, in describing them they would know how to connect them with these less exceptional states of which they are only an aberration. Further, each of us would undoubtedly give less play to his private feelings; and what would be the effect on literature I do not know, though in mixing itself up with the life of the world it would assuredly come nearer its true aim. It would be thought no longer that originality consists in being like nobody else, but only in describing a personal experience of the world and life. And this would still be rhetoric, and I venture to say that it would be good and excellent rhetoric.

Here, perhaps, is a more important consideration. Examine it closely enough and it will be seen that what is really attacked under the name of rhetoric is all the means for urging on men things which are not to be proved. Liberty, and immortality, and even morality cannot be proved: they are to be urged. We cannot establish the necessity of obedience, or of self-control, or of self-sacrifice; but we can incline our hearts to them. This is what those people cannot tolerate who, as they say, believe only in what can be proved. So they include indifferently under the name of rhetoric—with a disdain mingled with a certain amount of anger—all they fear may embarrass or contradict their own convictions. Rhetoric they see in a *Provinciale* of Pascal! Rhetoric, in a sermon of Bossuet, on the *Honneur du monde* or the *Haine des hommes contre la vérité*! Rhetoric, in a *Discours* of Rousseau, in his *Contrat social* or his *Profession de foi du Vicaire savoyard*! Rhetoric, in the *Génie du Christianisme* or in the *Essai sur l'Indifférence*! And rhetoric, generally, in all they feel to oppose, not the truth—since it escapes us, alas, in all these matters—but the ideas or principles with which, in default of the truth, and by their own necessities, they have decided to comply. As for me, I know no finer praise of rhetoric: and the more I think of it, the more it seems to me that there precisely is its forte, as well as the hidden reason of the severe attacks to which it is exposed.

Yes, where the power of logic and dialectic ends, there begins the power of rhetoric. Where reasoning wanders, and reason even blenches, there does it come and found its empire. It lays hold of an entire province of the human mind, not the least vast and inaccessible, and

impenetrable to the demonstrations of erudition and the inductions of metaphysics; it establishes itself there, and reigns in sovereign sway. "Tell me," asked Cicero, at the beginning of one of his treatises on rhetoric, which contain passages which are worth all his speeches, "tell me how would men ever have been able to bend their minds to the observation of uprightness and justice: how would they have consented to yield their wishes to those of their fellows: how would they have been persuaded to make a common cause of the common interest, and in this interest to sacrifice at need even their life, if it had not been by the aid and means of persuasion and eloquence and rhetoric?" And indeed, uprightness, charity, justice, virtue, love of country, all the sentiments that give the society of men its value, and bring it about that not even instinct, which is always selfish, but even reason, which is always calculating, can dissuade us—it is this, it is eloquence and rhetoric which make them touch the heart, which lend them a voice and gesture, which make them speak, if I may say so, to their very bodies. Such is the origin of their "figures," the aim of their "movements," the explanation of their power. In materializing what can be neither seen nor touched, rhetoric makes them real motives, or rather springs of action. The rhetoricians of the sixteenth century brought about the Reformation, and the rhetoricians of the eighteenth the Revolution, and these perhaps are great enough things—whatever else may be thought of them. For they acted in their character of rhetoricians, at those times when mighty resolves were afoot, and their power was as if inherent in what is deepest in human nature. We do not live by bread, and algebra, and exegesis alone, but by every word that comes from the heart of our fellows and penetrates to ours. If rhetoric is the art of giving this word its value—and this is a definition which I think will hold—neither logic nor dialectics would ever prevail against it: and, instead of complaining that this is so, it seems to me that we should rather consider it a matter for congratulation.

For it matters not that it can be put to a bad use. What cannot be misused? *Corruptio optimi pessima est.* If rhetoric had less that made for good, it would have less that made for evil: and then is science, which is opposed to it, so sure of having produced nothing but good? It would be an easy matter to show its error if it believed so; and humanity has paid dearly for more than one service that we owe to the learned. But, what is more certain still, a demonstration has never triumphed over a sentiment; and therefore if there is a bad rhetoric, all that we can do against it, is to oppose to it a better. A speech, if I may say so, can be answered only by a speech, and a sermon by a sermon—Demosthenes against Æschines, Bossuet against Calvin—and why may I not go the length of saying that prosopopeia is to be answered only by hypotyposis, and metonymy only by synecdoche? Or, in other terms, truth is not to be substituted in our hearts for error, but

one belief for another belief, one sentiment for another, a stronger wish for a gentler wish, a more persuasive motive of acting for a more careless and sluggish one. So to proscribe rhetoric under the pretext of the evils which it has caused and the abuse which may be made of its examples and lessons, would be, I think, and perhaps it is evident, only to disarm it against itself. We have need of it against itself. Since it answers to a necessity of human nature, we must resign ourselves to it: and, if I have clearly explained my meaning, this necessity is the most imperative of all—more imperative indeed than the need of knowledge and understanding—since it is the necessity of acting.

Some one will tell me, I know, that I here confound rhetoric with eloquence. I should like him then to be kind enough to tell me what is the difference. For, be it Demosthenes, Cicero, or Bossuet, I hardly know the orator who has not been accused of declamation, and I have even observed that a different way of thinking is generally sufficient to give rise to this accusation. Bossuet, for example, is a rhetorician for Voltaire in his *Discours sur l'Histoire universelle,* but not for the author of the *Soirées de Saint-Pétersbourg;* and let him preach his *Sermon sur l'Unité de l'Eglise,* and he becomes a rhetorician again for the author of *Le Pape* and *L'Eglise gallicane.* That is to say that the only difference between an orator and a rhetorician consists in the soundness of what they say; and as this soundness has not, and never can have, any place but in the opinion of their audience, the difference is evidently not very great. If, however, we were to take rhetoric in its narrowest sense, and, by sacrificing substance to form, were to accept the definition given by those who despise it most, there would be no lack of arguments, both numerous and decisive, for a reply, and of these I shall select only one.

Is language an organism? It is said to be so, and I cannot say, though I rather think it is not; but what it is assuredly, what it becomes as soon as it is used for anything else than the needs of daily life, is a work of art. *Die Sprache als Kunst:* the title of this book pleases me. What colours and lines are in the plastic arts, or sounds also in music, words are in a language, and, with stronger reason, the figures, the turns, the arrangement of the parts of the sentence. There are beautiful words which sound well to the ear, and there are disgusting words which offend and wound it and fill the imagination with vulgar or impure ideas. Do I say words? It should be syllables, a simple combination of consonants and vowels. As many examples as can be wished for will be found in the slang dictionaries. Can that art be possibly considered contemptible or only indifferent which endeavours to avoid these encounters or concourses of sounds, these words of the gaol or the convict prison, and, though it cannot always entirely avoid them, at least does all it can to disguise them? If, as Pascal says, "the mere tone of voice changes the aspect of a poem or speech," are not accent,

turn, and movement enough to modify the meaning of a sentence? By merely changing the order of the words of a sentence, what was obscure becomes clear; what was heavy, light and lively; what was rude and cacophonous, rhythmical and harmonious. And were not metaphors, long before they became "ornaments of speech," the means and natural process of the development and fructification, so to speak, of languages? It is imagination which finds them; but if rhetoric is the art of using imagination, of not confounding an antithesis with a similitude, if, above all, it teaches us when and how imagination is to be used, to what extent, and for the expression of what ideas and sentiments, who can fail to see that, taken even in this its narrowest sense, rhetoric always and necessarily leads from the art of writing to that of thinking?

I would really make out too good a case were I to care to show that it is also the art of composing. To order one's thoughts, to regulate their development according to their importance, to pass from one to the other by imperceptible transitions, to adjust the turn of their movements to something less capricious than our humour—it is this that some very great writers have been unable to do for want of a little rhetoric, a Montesquieu, for example, and a Chateaubriand. Are they less great on that account, may be asked. No: but I do not think they are any greater; and the *Esprit des Lois* and the *Génie du Christianisme* are, by the very faults of their composition, the one less clear and intelligible, and the other less persuasive and conclusive. If, moreover, none of us can flatter ourselves on being Chateaubriand or Montesquieu, we have undoubtedly good reason to let their faults alone, for these can be covered or excused only by equal or similar qualities. In the meantime we run no risk, if there is an art of composing, and if it can be taught, in learning it. And further let us note that this class of rules contains in itself the very means of dispensing with them, if need be. To know what must not be done is one part of justice, and an extensive enough part, since the codes of every country turn on it. Rhetoric in like manner teaches us what must be neither written nor said. But it teaches us also what must be done; and though it may not follow that we can do it, I really do not see that there is any harm in trying.

Let us remember, in short, that it is these despised and much-mocked rhetoricians, these sworn weighers of words and syllables, these "recorders" of usage, these virtuosos in the art of fine speech, these leaders of fashion, a Balzac, a Vaugelas, the *précieuses* even, La Bruyère, Fénelon too, Voltaire above all, a Rollin, a Rivarol—and how many others?—it is they who have made our French prose the supple and pliant, the keen and delicate, the wonderful instrument it is—or was. This higher rhetoric which is to be found, when sought for, in the writings of a Chateaubriand or a Rousseau, a Bossuet or a Pascal, they

have set forth clearly in these writings and put within our reach. Nobody knew what the natural style was: Pascal appeared and revealed it, and all its merits were recognized immediately. But it is the rhetoricians who have examined wherein this natural style consists, and whether any of its secrets may be stolen from the author of the *Provinciales,* and it is they who have pointed out the methods of the idiosyncrasies of Pascal, if I may say so, and enriched the language by them. If on the other hand, in another writer, the author of the *Petit Carême,* for example, there are too many useless ornaments, too great a desire to please, too many pretty things, and generally more thought about himself than his subject—which may well be the very definition of bad rhetoric—it is still the rhetoricians who have informed us against him, who have unveiled his artifice, who have made us feel the abuse of rhetoric in the use of these very processes. I cannot believe that they have here done us such a bad service; and if anyone were to follow in their footsteps, I do not think that he would waste his time.

There is no doubt that some people have thought of it, since we can no longer recognize, under the diversity of words, the similarity of things. Granted that rhetoric is a legacy of the past—which is sufficient with some people to discredit it—we set no value on rhetoricians, but quite a particular one on stylists. Yet did Gautier not indulge in rhetoric—and very bad rhetoric, to say so in passing—when he wrote his *Capitaine Fracasse*? Did he not keep open school of rhetoric when he repeated one of his favourite sayings: "I am very strong. I score five hundred on the dynamometer, and *I do not mix metaphors.*" The advice has actually been followed so well, that open your journals and you will see that the sole measure of a writer's style is not the justness but the unity of his metaphors.[1] A mixed metaphor! Send the culprit back to school! Nobody remembers that one of the chief characteristics of affectation and preciosity of style is precisely this unity of the metaphors. But what really is the newly published correspondence of Flaubert but a course of rhetoric, in which I very willingly admit there are some most excellent lessons? Here is one which it seems to me to the point to quote:

> We are surprised at the worthy fellows of the age of Louis XIV, but they were not men of enormous genius—and I know four at least in whom we
>
> TRISSOTIN
>
> Pour cette grande *faim* qu'a mes yeux on expose,
> Un plat seul de huit vers me semble peu de chose,
> Et je pense qu'ici je ne ferai pas mal,
> De joindre à l'épigramme ou bien au madrigal,
> Le *ragoût* d'un sonnet qui, chez une princesse,
> A passé pour avoir quelque délicatesse,
> Il est de *sel attique assaisonné* partout,
> Et vous le trouverez, je crois, d'assez bon *goût.*

> are mistaken—but what conscientiousness! How they force themselves to find just expressions for their thoughts! What work! What consultations with one another! What a knowledge of Latin! How slowly they read! And all their thought is expressed: the form is full, crammed and stuffed till it almost cracks.

Is this rhetoric or not? I do not say it is of the finest—there is hardly a word less suitable for Flaubert—but is it not good, and almost of the best?

If, however, these considerations, though somewhat summary, should not succeed in disarming or influencing certain disdainful adversaries, others may be offered which are more utilitarian, and very erudite at the same time. They may be asked why the Romans and Greeks cultivated rhetoric so passionately. I do not see what they can possibly answer but that, in the republics of antiquity, speech was a weapon, and whoever wished to act had to know how to handle it or fence with it. In Athens as in Rome, he who could not speak not only was unable to defend himself but had to be almost invariably in the *clientèle* or political household of a superior in eloquence. Read Fénelon on this point, in his *Letter to the Academy*. For us then who live to-day under the government of speech, of whom it may be said that our daily interests are at the mercy of an oration, or the impossibility of replying to it, it is necessary to learn to speak, and, like the Greeks or Romans, we have more need of rhetoric than our fathers had. We have need of it even to retort to or, as used to be said, to take the edge off that of our adversaries. But if I were to insist on this argument, I might mix up, in a question so far entirely literary, certain reasons which are less so, and which it is sufficient to have indicated. After all, the greatest enemies of rhetoric are perhaps those also of government by speech: the liberty they like is dumb, and the right they vindicate so energetically for others is that of being silent.

There is another reason which seems to me still stronger, and with it I shall end. Rhetoric has now for a few years been deleted from our programme of secondary education, to be replaced by the vague "notions on literary history," and, if I may once dare to take the liberty of speaking for myself, it is not I who would complain that something was being done for literary history. It is well to know on leaving school that the elder Corneille, for example, did not mean to flatter Louis XIV in his *Cinna*, under the name of Augustus. This was not known till quite recently. Rhetoric is one good thing, and chronology is another, and, may I say so, is one of my passions. But since there is now much talk of the establishment of a school of French Classics, it does not seem useless to express the wish that rhetoric will there retake its natural place; and it may be as well for me to give the principal reason. It is that our classical literature—and not merely its prose, but

also its poetry—is essentially oratorical. "The spoken word," said Vaugelas in the Preface to his *Remarques sur la langue française,* "is the first in order and dignity, since the written word is only its image, as it itself is the image of the thought"; and from Malherbe to Buffon at least, to Chateaubriand and even to Guizot, I can think only of a few story writers whose style of writing does not verify this principle. And we know, too, the attention the author of *Madame Bovary* paid to the harmony of the sentence. What does this mean but that for two or three hundred years our greatest writers have not *seen* but *heard* themselves write. To dispel much of the cavilling at the style of Molière, we have only not to be content with running over his plays with our eyes, but to go and see them played or to read them aloud. Now, without a little rhetoric, how can we interpret such a literature? Would we not lose half of the profit to be drawn from it? We would only be forgetting, as it were, to light our lantern. Try to *explain* Racine's *Andromaque* or *Britannicus* without insisting on that *irony* which is one of his favourite means of shading his thought, and of which he apparently meant to exhaust every turn! Or try to show the unique characteristic of the *Sermons* of Bossuet without pointing out their superiority to those of Bourdaloue, and be successful without the help of rhetoric! We may be assured that without rhetoric the school of French Classics will at once degenerate into a school of facts, and this is certainly not what is wanted—or at least promised. This reason alone would have been sufficient to lead me to undertake the defence of this despised creature. I hope, however, that the reader will approve of the other reasons, and that, on joining all together, he will be willing to agree with us that there are decidedly some of the dead that must be brought to life again.

* * *

PIERRE LOTI

Julian Viaud, who wrote under the name of "Pierre Loti," was born in 1850 at Rochefort. He became an officer in the French Navy and in his books he has given the impressions which were gathered during his many voyages in strange lands. He is a master of the descriptive art and can suggest an atmosphere with the utmost subtlety and skill. Among his best known books are *Pêcheur d'Islande*, *Le Mariage de Loti*, *Les Désenchantées*, *Madame Chrysanthème*, and *Mon frère Yves*. Loti died in 1923.

The following essay is taken from *Carmen Sylva and Sketches from the Orient* by permission of the publishers, the Macmillan Company, Ltd.

SERPENT CHARMERS

IT WAS spring, the twilight of a May day, in T'etuan, the white city. Not a sound was to be heard. Over the terraces and the little old domes and houses spread the endless white stretch of lime; everywhere was this mysterious white shroud. Men slowly passed along, clad in garments of the most exquisite tints, in dreamy attitude; their dark and splendid oval eyes did not appear to behold the things of earth. The golden sunset cast a pink tint over all, and in the inmost recesses of the old and almost shapeless houses, the lime gradually assumed a blue colour somewhat like snow in the shade. There were passers-by dressed in golden yellow, pale green, and salmon colour, others in blue and pink, others who had chosen rarer and indescribable tints, all majestic and grave, with bronzed faces and intensely black eyes. Here and there grew tufts of fresh spring plants, poppies, buttercups, mignonette, springing up all about, on the blue-white old walls. But it was the dead, ghastly white of the lime that dominated all; it seemed to give light and to refract it, sending it back in softer beams to the immense golden sky which now appeared all refulgent with the glow. Nowhere could be seen prominent shadows and outlines or sombre colours; the slowly moving living beings caused none but strangely clear and distinct tints, as pure and ethereal as one sees in heavenly visions, to pass over this universal whiteness; everything was fused and melted in tranquil light; those great, dreamy, human eyes were the only things that were black. . . .

A short distance away were heard the first faint notes of a flute, so sad and plaintive, and the muffled tambourine of the serpent charmers. Then the men, who had before been walking aimlessly in this white labyrinth, gradually directed their steps to the same spot, in response to the appeal of the music.

The charmers had placed themselves in the centre of the public square, in the highest part of the town. In the blue distance could be seen a series of white lines, almost devoid of outline; these were terraces. There was also visible a succession of apparent snowdrifts, and these consisted of T'etuan itself, half buried in the May evening mist.

The men with their flowing robes formed a circle around the charmers. The latter, naked and tawny-hued, sang and danced like their own serpents, twisting and twining their supple busts to the music of their own flutes, the while shaking and tossing their curly locks. The whole scene was beautiful, from the sky above down to the humblest bronze-armed camel-driver, who looked on with vacant gaze, seeing nothing of what was taking place.

And there I was in their midst, taking no account of time, charmed

like them, and, as it happened, resting a little amongst these motionless beings, heedless of the passing hours. And these sad-toned flutes and tambourines—along with the whole of this Africa—filled me with their soothing charm, with the same magic as in bygone days, in my long-past youthful years. . . .

This land is indeed the one that still sings for me in sweetest strains the universal song of death.

* * *

"ALAIN"

THIS is the pseudonym of Emile Chartier, the apostle of common sense, who looks upon men and things with a tranquil gaze, and hates only fanaticism. His calm wisdom and sense of values are particularly welcome at a time of flux and turmoil like the present. M. Chartier was born in 1868 and has written *Propos d'Alain*, *Quatre-vingt-un Chapitres sur L'esprit et Les Passions*, *Système des Beaux-arts*, *Mars ou la Guerre Jugée*, *Propos sur le Christianisme*, and *Propos sur le Bonheur*.

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I. SHEEP

THE sheep is in a bad position to judge. And so, we see, the shepherd walks in front and the sheep throng behind him; and it is quite clear they would think all was lost, if they ceased to hear the shepherd, who is to them as their god. I have heard tell that sheep that are being driven to the capital for slaughter pine and die by the wayside, if they have not with them their wonted shepherd. Things are thus by nature, for it is true the shepherd thinks much of the sheep and the good of the sheep; things go awry only at the slaughtering; but that is a speedy, separate matter and does not alter feelings.

The mother ewes explain this to the lambs, teaching sheepish discipline and scaring them with the wolf. And scaring them even more with the black sheep, if so be there is one, who would like to explain that the sheep's greatest enemy is precisely the shepherd. "Who, pray, has care for you? Who shields you from sun and rain? Who measures his steps by yours, so that you may browse at will? Who, with toil and weariness, goes to seek out the lost ewe? Who brings her back enfolded in his arms? For a sheep dead of the murrain, I have seen the hard man weep. Yea, I have seen him weep. The day when a

lamb was eaten by the wolf, there was fine wrath, and the shepherd's master, that higher, hidden providence, joined in. He pledged his oath the lamb should be avenged. There was war made upon the wolves and five wolf-heads nailed on the byre doors, for a single lamb. He is our strength and our well-being. His thought is our thought; his will is our will. That is why, lamb, my son, thou owest it to thyself to overcome the difficulty of obedience, as a sage sheep has said. Ponder therefore and be thine own judge. For what fine reasons wouldst thou disobey? A tuft of grass and flowers? The pleasure of a gambol? Thou mightest as well say thou wilt let thyself be governed by thy tongue or tameless feet. Nay, nay. Thou knowest well enough that in a well-governed lamb, whose ambition is to be a true sheep, the legs do naught against the whole body. Therefore follow out this amongst all sheepish ideas; there is, perhaps, none that better marks the true sheep-spirit. Be unto the flock even as thy leg is unto thee."

So the lamb trod the path of these ideas sublime, in order that he might wax strong upon his shanks: and sore need he had of strengthening, for all about him was the smell of blood, and he could not otherwise than hear quickly stifled groans. In fine he had bodings of some horrible thing. Yet what could he fear under so kind a master and having nothing done save at his order? What need to fear when you see the shepherd with his wonted countenance, calm as in the pasturage? Whom shall one trust, if one trusts not this long chain of actions, all of which are benefits? When the benefactor, when the defender is at peace, what can there be to fear? And even if the lamb finds himself laid upon a bloody table, he casts his eyes around for the benefactor, and seeing him hard by, heedful of him, he finds, in his lamb's heart, all courage possible. Then passes the knife; then is the solution wiped out, and on the same instant the problem.

II. MORE SHEEP

CONTINUING my studies of sheepish policy, upon which I entered following Plato's footsteps, I came to realize that the sheep have great power over the shepherd, almost limitless indeed. For if the sheep grow thin, or merely if their wool curls badly, the shepherd is unhappy and that with no hypocrisy. What if the sheep start dying? Straightway the shepherd seeks out the causes and makes inquiry into grass, water, and sheep-dog. It is said the shepherd loves his dog, who is as it were his minister of police; but far better still he loves his sheep. And if it stands proven that a dog by too much biting, or too much barking, in fine by a propensity for ever growling, takes from his flock all lust of food, love, and life, then will the shepherd drown his dog. That is tantamount to saying the opinions of the

flock are as law in the shepherd's eye; yea, even the wildest; and the shepherd will not pause to say "the sheep are dullards" but will forthwith apply himself to satisfy them, noting the wind they like, what shift they make with the sun, the noises they dread, and what smells throw them into panic fear.

And thus the shepherd would be in no wise a hypocrite, were he to utter to his sheep such words as these: "Gentlemen of the sheepfold, you who are my friends, my subjects, and my masters, deem not that I can hold concerning grass or wind opinions other than are your own; and if it is told I govern you, understand it on this wise, that I attach more value to your opinions than you do yourselves, and thus hold them fast in memory to deter you from belying them, whether upon some impulse, or through that happy frivolity which is your share. You have but to signify, in every case, what pleases or what displeases you, and thereafter think of it no more. I am your memory and I am your foresight, or, more nobly speaking, providence. And if I deter you from any act that might beguile you, such as browsing the wet grass or sleeping in the sun, it is because I am assured you would regret it. Your wills rule mine; that, indeed, were putting it too mildly, for I have no other will than yours, in short I am truly yours."

This speech is true and authenticated. Thus anyone who should wish to set up universal suffrage among sheep, whereby the shepherd should be incessantly controlled and called to book, would hear it objected that such control and calling to book go without saying and define the constant relationship existing between flock and shepherd. Imagine now the sheep taking upon themselves to wish to die of old age. Would they not then be of sheep the blackest and most ingrate? Would a claim so preposterous be even examined? Could there be found in sheepish law a single precedent or any principle relative to so novel a thesis? I warrant the dog, minister of police, would say to the shepherd: "These sheep say not what they mean; and this mad idea is a sign they are not pleased with the grass or with the byre. That is where we must look."

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PAUL CLAUDEL

Paul Claudel, who was born in 1868, is at once a realist and a mystic. He has travelled widely in the East, and his travel-sketches convey very skilfully the spirit behind the scene which so often eludes the Western eye. He has also written poems and plays of an unusual character—*La Jeune Fille Violaine*, *L'Echange*, and *L'Annona faite à Marie* being among them. He is a devout Catholic and has taken a foremost place among the writers who have endeavoured to interpret anew to their generation the message of the Catholic Church.

The following essay is taken from *The East I Know*, translated by Teresa Frances and William Rose Benet, by permission of The Oxford University Press and The Yale University Press.

THE CITY AT NIGHT

IT IS raining softly. The night has come. The policeman takes the lead and turns to the left, ceasing his talk of the time when, as a kitchen-boy in the invading army, he saw his Major installed in the sanctuary of the "God of Long Life." The road that we follow is mysterious. By a series of alleys, of passages, stairs, and doorways, we come out in the court of the temple, where buildings with clawlike copings and hornlike peaks make a black frame to the night sky. A smouldering fire flickers from the dark doorway. We penetrate the blackness of the hall.

The cave is filled with incense, glowing with red light. One cannot see the ceiling. A wooden grille separates the idol from his clients, and from the table of offerings, where garlands of fruit and bowls of food are deposited. The bearded face of a giant image can be vaguely distinguished. The priests are dining, seated about a round table. Against the wall is a drum as enormous as a tun, and a great gong in the form of the ace of spades. Two red tapers, like square columns, lose themselves in the smoke and the night, where vague pennants float.

Onward!

The narrow tangle of streets, where we are involved in the midst of a shadowy crowd, is lit only by the deep open booths which border it. These are the workrooms of carpenters, engravers; the shops of tailors, shoemakers, and vendors of fur. From innumerable kitchens, behind the display of bowls of noodles and soup, the sound of frying escapes. In a dark recess some woman attends a crying child. Among stacked-up coffins is the gleam of a pipe. A lamp, a sidewise flicker, shows strange medleys. At the street corners, at the bends of heavy little stone bridges, in niches behind iron bars, dwarfish idols can be seen between two red candles. After a long progress under the rain, in the darkness and filth, we find ourselves suddenly in a yellow blind alley which a big lantern lights with a brutal flare. Colour of blood, colour of pestilence, the high walls of the dungeon where we are have been daubed with an ochre so red that it seems of itself to irradiate light. The door at our left is simply a round hole.

We reach a court. Here is another temple. It is a shadowy hall from which exudes an odour of earth. It is enriched with idols, which, disposed in two rows around three sides of the place, brandish swords, lutes, roses, and branches of coral. They tell us that these are the years of human life. While I try to find the twenty-seventh, I am left

behind; and, before leaving, the fancy takes me to look into a niche that I find on the further side of the door. A brown demon with four pairs of arms, his face convulsed by rage, is hidden there like an assassin.

Forward! The roads become more and more miserable. We go past high palisades of bamboo; and at last, emerging from the southern gate, we turn toward the east. The road follows the base of a high crenellated wall. On the other hand sink the deep trenches of a dried river-bed. Below we see sampans lit by cooking fires. A shadowy people swarm there like the spirits of the Inferno.

And undoubtedly this lamentable river-bank marks the end planned for our exploration, because we retrace our steps. City of Lanterns, we gaze again upon the chaos of thy ten thousand faces!

Seeking an explanation, a reason why this town where we loitered is so distinct in our memories, we are struck at once with this fact: there are no horses in the streets. The city is entirely of human beings. It seems an article of faith with the Chinese not to employ an animal or a machine for work by which a man may live. This explains the narrowness of the streets, the stairs, the curved bridges, the houses without fences, the sinuous windings of the alleys and passages. The city forms a coherent whole, an industrious honeycomb communicating in all its parts, perforated like an ant-hill. When the night comes, every one barricades himself. During the day there are no doors, that is to say no doors that close. The door here has no official function. It is simply an opening. Not a wall but can by some fissure give passage to an agile and slender person. The large streets necessary to general traffic, and to an ordered mechanical life, would be of no use here. Here merely collective alleys and passages are provided.

An opium den, a market of prostitutes, these last fill the framework of my memory. The smoking den is a vast nave, empty all the height of two stories which superimpose their balconies inside. The building is full of blue smoke, one breathes an odour of burning chestnuts. It is a heavy perfume, powerful, stagnant, strong as the beat of a gong. Sepulchral smoke, it establishes between our air and dreams a middle atmosphere which the seeker of these mysteries inhales. One sees across the haze the fire of little opium lamps like the souls of the smokers. Later they will arrive in greater numbers. Now it is too early.

On narrow benches, their heads helmed with flowers and pearls, clothed in wide blouses of silk and full embroidered trousers, motionless, with their hands on their knees, the prostitutes wait in the street like beasts at a fair, in the pell-mell and the dust of passers-by. Beside their mothers and dressed like them, also motionless, little girls are seated on the same bench. Behind, a flare of petrol lights the opening of the stairway.

I go. And I carry the memory of a life congested, naïve, restless; of a city at the same time open and crowded, a single house with a multifold family. I have seen the city of other days, when, free of modern influences, men swarmed in an artless disorder; in fact it is the fascination of all the past that I am leaving, when, issuing out of the double gate in the hurly-burly of wheelbarrows and litters, in the midst of lepers and epileptics, I see the electric lights of the Concession shine.

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PIERRE HAMP

This author has specialized in what has been termed the social novel. His work, whether in the form of essays, sketches, or novels, consists of a realistic presentation of the life of the labouring man in all its crudeness and agony. Labour, he asserts, offers a wider field to the artist than any which he has yet taken. It is "greater than War, richer than Beauty, and nobler than Love." So all his writing is on the one theme and his style is correspondingly forceful. His works have been published as a series under the collective title of *La Peine des Hommes*. M. Hamp was born in 1876.

The present essay has been specially translated for this volume by J. W. Jeaffreson, from *Un Nouvel Honneur* (Ed. de *La Nouvelle Revue Française*) by permission of the publishers, Librairie Gallimard.

A NEW HONOUR

TO LOVE the work one does is an important condition of happiness. Man and woman stake the whole charm of life on two decisions: calling and marriage. To take pleasure in one's task, to love and be loved are the two winning cards in the great game which calls for prudence of decision.

How many parents doom their children to manual ignorance by setting them to jobs without apprenticeship because there is pay from the outset! By the notice "wages earned immediately," recruiters of children lure the young workers to misfortune, employing them at once at sweeping and running errands, which latter please the child by reason of the tips they bring. By the old healthy tradition of apprenticeship the child was allowed no wage. He was a pupil to be given training in a craft. Abuse consisted in extracting profit from him by teaching him little and subjecting him to heavy tasks such as cleaning and the carrying of burthens. But a firm stood in evil renown if it was incapable of training its apprentices well. Workmen were proud of their earliest years of labour and named those to whom they owed their training.

The present-day organization of mass-production, with emolument

from the start, increases the number of child-workers—a dire misfortune, that, for a nation and dire misfortune for individuals. It fashions men who have no love for their trades, because each will follow several. Trades unloved are a set-back to national fortune.

We are close upon a time when idleness will be a dishonour. The able-bodied man without a profession will rank in the scale of social values near to the thief and swindler. A wondrous privilege, indeed, is that of the man, young and hale, whom money exempts from labour. Substitution in military service has vanished from our customs; mercenaries exist only in the trades of which, provided one is rich, one need have none, whereas not to belong to a regiment is legally impossible, unless one has been certified infirm or sick.

Unlike general conscription, obligatory work does not as yet figure on the French statute-book, but it is already part of our customs. The idle rich man no longer stands so high in honour. We are getting to abhor the prejudice of money as the procurer of enjoyment. Money should be nothing else than potential labour, a material for industry like cotton, coal, and steel. That no man sound in life and limb should be enabled by money to shirk labour, and that the choice of a craft should afford the best scope for the child's aptitudes, are two potent conditions of national strength, which cannot exist apart from strength of labour.

A people with numerous families living with the utmost thrift on interest from investments would sink to ruin and debasement. We must manufacture, till the soil, and sell. Interest no more suffices to create a national taste for labour than the desire for immediate wage can turn a child into an apprentice with a love for his trade. Labour must have a soul. "Thou shalt love that which thou doest": to this idealism we are eternally bound to revert.

The building up anew of craft-honour is as important as the sanitation of factories. To declare this unfeasible in an age of mechanization and mass-production is to consent to the stultification of all human labour and to conclude that the conditions of happiness in the trades lie behind us and not ahead of our striving. The soul of labour cannot thus die at a time when mechanical means are powerfully increasing. The distress of our age roots in the growing mechanical equipment of our trades and their decline in spiritualness. It would seem that loathing for the giant tasks facing civilization degrades it at the very hour it reckoned on making itself more powerful. It is faith in labour that requires building anew. The late War revealed the full power of the labour of men, capable by mere exterminatory force of dooming them to utter poverty. The devastated regions of France are a product of war-factories. Were we to assess the application of this energy to the welfare of mankind, if by a reversal of their power, left quantitatively unaltered, the war-manufactures throughout the world had become peace-manufactures, if men had devoted to self-saving, and not to

excess profit, the same ingenuity they devoted to self-ruin, then had war and poverty been vanquished. Instead of the millions of the dead, there would now be shooting up healthy children joyous with well-being; instead of the wrecked masonry amassed by battle, houses well supplied with light and air would be rising amidst smiling gardens.

France was the scene of the maximum exertion of war; she is now compelled to become the scene of the maximum exertion of labour. To this task she will prove equal and great will be the example she can offer, if she is able legally to assail the dishonour of idleness.

Social etiquette counts as an insult the refusal to come and dance upon invitation, even when made to a man whose custom is to work betimes in the morning. To betake oneself in elegant attire to gatherings to which one has been invited and to surrender one's seat to the ladies are elemental exercises of politeness. Working-class politeness embodies rites more curious and views as an offence the refusal to drink with him who offers to clink glasses. In the friendship that is aggrieved by scorn to "take a glass" there is perpetuated still something of the holiness of antique libation. "Let's take a drop together" is a memento of the gods. The middle-class mind and the working-class mind are at one in the observances marking the invitation to spurn which is an offence and a token of pride. To refrain passes for contempt of the man who does you the honour of invitation. Labour's good manners bear a further stamp. "Stand aside for him that carries," says the workman, and he makes room for the bearer of a load. This supersedes the courtesy of yielding your place to a lady. To sit down is the due of the load-bearer, not of the young woman.

Labour's manner of understanding sunders the two species of honour. The man of good breeding deems it ignoble to take a farthing of other people's money save through the medium of a limited liability company. The pencil on the stationer's counter is sacrosanct, not so the pencil on the table of a board of directors.

The workman who dips his hand into a mate's pocket is penalized by being sent to Coventry, by refusal to drink with him, by blows and suchlike energetic exhibitions of contempt, without appeal to the police, for to deliver up a man, save for homicide, is accounted an act of ill repute.

To remove goods from the workshop is reprobated only if the quantity abstracted does not come under the "cabbage" or surreptitious profit which the workman by his particular skill saves out of the material allotted him for completion of his piece. According to the workman's code of honour "cabbage" is not regarded as theft. The seamstress who from a length cuts off whole yards with intent to carry them away is a thief; not she who disposes of the thread and snippings she economizes out of what is allowed her for the making. Her employer,

on the contrary, would be a thief in claiming for himself what his workwoman has earned by her own personal skill.

In match-factories corporate honour is not infringed by each man appropriating his box for private use, but is, if he takes a dozen with the purpose of selling them.

Minute politeness is grown obsolete: the hand to the ladies, curtseying, bowing and scraping are clean out of use. But that propriety which yields first place to the man bowed under a burthen, shall govern society now impelled to reconstitution in the strength and the law of the trades. The legal enaction of obligatory labour, imminent for the whole civilized world, shall powerfully modify the quality of prejudices.

Instead of the sweating coal-heaver, with laden back-bone, being the unhandsome outcast, he shall become the man of honour. Already sport has begotten the habit of glorifying physical effort, even the most unpleasant, such as the punch ensanguining a face.

Fist-play, synonymous with foul-play according to the dictum of a society that beheld in sword-play the one and only noble exercise, has become a spectacle beloved of the select. May not the anvil-smiter's gesture attain like popularity with the boxer's and cricketer's? Is sporting honour conditional upon the uselessness of the gestures performed? To propel a ball to a vast distance in a field by means of a club, wherein consists golfing, and then to bring it again to the self-same spot, where it might as well have been left, if that spot was considered the most fitting, is not an act as urgent for the citizen's health as is the sweeping of streets. Sports and trades contrast two varieties of human gesture, the one productive of things requisite to life, bearing burthens and plying tools, the other productive of fun, that is to say self-sufficing activity, recreative to the performer and to the onlooker pleasing.

Let but social esteem be vouchsafed to handicraft as it is to sport, and straightway a new honour is founded, overdue these two thousand years since St. Paul said: "That if any would not work, neither shall he eat."

Waving a tennis-racket, a foil, or a pair of boxing-gloves brings greater glory than throwing a weaver's shuttle, driving a graver's tool, or bringing down a hammer. In outline these gestures are not so unlike, but the quality of esteem accorded them is different indeed, maximum honour waiting upon minimum usefulness.

There exists no world's championship for the handling of a tool. Universal competition is organized for the shooting of fire-arms, delivery of fisticuffs, wrestling, swordsmanship, each genus of pugnacity.

Our civilization has not yet bestowed honour on the labour creative of its power. As long as it omits to do so it will remain uncertain of its destiny and of its strength.

* * *

MARCEL PROUST

Born in Paris in 1871, Proust was educated at the Lycée Condorcet. For some years he took an active part in affairs, but asthma seized him and he withdrew into seclusion, jealously devoting to his work every available moment of the limited time that he felt remained to him. His writing is noted for its subtle and microscopic analysis of character. He is for ever probing that he may find the hidden motive. This characteristic is sometimes reflected in a style which becomes occasionally so involved as to be disconcerting.

The present passage describing the death of a writer takes a pathetic interest from the fact that Proust knew his own end to be near. He died in 1922. The essay has been specially translated for this volume by J. W. Jeaffreson, from *La Nouvelle Revue Française* by permission of the publishers, Librairie Gallimard.

THE DEATH OF BERGOTTE

I HEARD there had occurred that day a death which grieved me much, the death of Bergotte.

During the months preceding his death, he suffered from insomnia, and what is worse, as soon as he fell asleep, from nightmares which, if he waked, caused him to shun renewal of sleep. For long he had loved dreams, even bad dreams, because thanks to them, thanks to the contradiction they offer with the reality we have before us in the wakeful state, they give us, at least at the moment of waking, deep feeling of having slept. But Bergotte's nightmares were otherwise. When he had talked of nightmare, formerly, he had meant unpleasant things going on in his brain. Now, as it were coming from outside himself he was aware of a hand holding a wet rag which, wiped across his face by an evil woman, was striving to awake him, unbearable ticklings on the hips, the fury—because Bergotte sleeping had murmured that he drove badly—of a stark mad driver who hurled himself upon the writer and bit his fingers: sawed them. Finally, as soon as in his sleep the darkness was sufficient, nature enacted a kind of undress rehearsal of the apoplectic seizure one day to carry him off. Bergotte would be driving up under the porch of the Swanns' new mansion, would try to get out. Swift vertigo felled him and pinned him to his seat. He tried to clutch the stone pillar in front of him but did not find leverage enough to get upon his feet. He consulted doctors who, flattered by his calling them in, discerned in his virtues as a strenuous worker (for twenty years he had not done a stroke) and in overstrain the cause of his discomforts. They advised him not to read hair-

raising stories (he read nothing), to get more advantage from the sun "indispensable to life" (he had owed a few years of relative betterment to claustral confinement to his house), to take more nutriment (which made him lose flesh and chiefly nourished his nightmares). One of his physicians was gifted with the spirit of contradiction and banter. As soon as Bergotte saw him in the others' absence, in order not to wound his feelings, he submitted to him as ideas of his own what the others had advised him. The contradictory doctor, thinking Bergotte was trying to get himself prescribed something he liked, vetoed these immediately, often with arguments so hastily concocted to meet the case that, when faced with the material objections advanced by Bergotte, the contradictory doctor was in the same breath compelled to contradict himself, but, for new reasons, corroborated his veto. Bergotte reverted to one of his early doctors, a man who plumed himself on his wit, especially in the presence of a master of the pen, and who, if Bergotte insinuated: "If I rightly remember Dr. —— told me—a long time ago of course—that it might congest my kidney or brain," smiled archly and with uplifted finger declared: "I said use, not abuse. Of course, if you exaggerate, any medicament becomes a double-edged weapon." There is in our bodies a kind of instinct for what is healthful to us, just as there is in our hearts for what constitutes moral duty, an instinct for which no doctor's authorization, be he of medicine or theology, is a substitute. We know cold baths to be harmful to us; we like them; we shall always find a doctor to recommend them to us, not to prevent their doing us harm. From each of his doctors Bergotte took what, from wisdom, he had forbidden himself for years. In a few weeks the old troubles had reappeared, the more recent had become aggravated. Driven wild by pain without a moment's respite, and in addition by insomnia broken by brief nightmares, Bergotte ceased to send for doctors and tried with success, but to excess, various narcotics, trustfully perusing the advertisements in which each was wrapped, advertisements that proclaimed the necessity for sleep but insinuated that all preparations procuring it (save that contained in the particular bottle enwrapped, which never produced deleterious effects) were toxic and therefore made the remedy worse than the disease. Bergotte sampled them all. Some are of another family than those to which we are accustomed, derivatives for instance of Ethyl and of Amyl. You imbibe the novel product, of composition unfamiliar, in delicious expectancy of the unknown. Your heart beats as at a first tryst. Toward what unexperienced sorts of sleep and dreams will the newcomer pilot us? He is now in us, he holds the controls of our thought. In what manner shall we fall asleep? And, once asleep, by what strange paths, over what summits, into what abyss will the Almighty Master lead us? What new grouping of sensations shall we experience on the journey? Will he lead us to discomfort? To beatitude? To death? Bergotte's

death came suddenly the day after he had entrusted himself to one of these friends (friends? enemies?) too potent. He died in the following circumstances. Owing to an attack of uraemia, fairly slight, he had been ordered rest. But a critic having written that in Vermeer's *View of Delft* (lent by the Hague Museum for an exhibition of Dutch painting), a picture he worshipped and fancied he knew thoroughly, a little patch of yellow wall (which he did not remember) was so wondrously painted that it was, if observed alone, like a precious work of Chinese art, of a beauty sufficient unto itself, Bergotte ate a few potatoes, sallied forth and turned into the exhibition. With the very first steps he had to climb, he was seized with dizziness. He passed in front of several pictures and was impressed with the dry unprofitableness of art so artificial, not worth the draughts and sunshine of a Venetian palazzo or a plain house beside the sea. At length he came in front of the Vermeer which he remembered as more radiant, more different from anything he knew, but in which, thanks to the critic's article, he for the first time noticed the small blue figures; the roseate sand; and lastly the precious matter of the tiny patch of yellow wall. His dizziness was growing; he fixed his gaze, like a child on a yellow butterfly he is bent on catching, upon the precious little patch of wall. It is thus I should have written, he said; my last books are too dry; there should have been several layers of colour overlaid; I should have made my phrase precious in itself, like that little yellow wall. Meanwhile the gravity of his dizzy fits did not escape him. In a celestial balance there appeared to him, weighting one of the two pans, his own life, whilst the other held the little patch of wall so dexterously limned in yellow. He felt that rashly he had given away the former for the latter. "And yet," he said to himself, "I should not like myself coupled with this show as a tragic item in the evening papers."

He kept repeating to himself, "Little patch of yellow wall with a pentice, little patch of yellow wall." As he did so he collapsed upon a circular settee, with equal abruptness ceased to think his life was in the balance and, with recovered optimism, muttered to himself, "Merely an attack of indigestion from those underdone potatoes; it is nothing." A second stroke felled him; he rolled from the settee to the floor; visitors and attendants one and all rush to him. He was dead. Dead for ever? Who shall say? Assuredly neither spiritualistic experiment, nor yet religious dogma afford any proof that the soul survives. What we can say is that everything in our lives proceeds as though we came into the world with a load of obligations contracted in some previous life. There is no reason, in the conditions of our life upon this earth, why we should think ourselves obliged to do good, to be considerate, even to be polite, no reason why the cultivated artist should think himself obliged to start afresh, maybe a score of times, a piece of work the admiration excited by which in the future will little matter

to his body eaten by worms, like the patch of wall painted with such master-craft and subtlety by a for ever unknown artist barely identified under the name Vermeer. All these obligations, which are without sanction in the present life, seemingly belong to a different world, founded upon kindness, scruple, and self-sacrifice, a world entirely different from this one, a world we leave in order to be born on earth, and to which we perhaps return to live again beneath the dominion of those unknown laws, obeyed here by us because we carried the teaching of them within us, knowing not who had graven them there, laws to which all deep labour of the intelligence brings us nearer and which are invisible only —if indeed they are—for fools. So that the idea that Bergotte was not for ever dead is without unlikelihood.

They buried him; but through the funereal night, in lighted shop-fronts, his books laid out three by three watched like angels with outspread wings and seemed, for him that was no more, the symbol of his resurrection.

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ANDRÉ MAUROIS

André Maurois has done more to reveal the Englishman to himself than any other modern writer. His acute perception, which misses no really significant trait, and his sympathetic understanding, which can distinguish between the real and the apparent, combined with a marvellous lucidity of style, make him an unrivalled interpreter of the English. Among his chief works are *Silences du Colonel Bramble*, *Discours du Docteur O'Grady*, *Ariel*, *Dialogues sur le Commandement*, *Méipe*, *The Life of Disraeli*, *Don Juan*, *Le Général Bramble*. M. Maurois was born in 1885 and educated at the Lycée de Rouen.

The present essay is included by permission of the author and D. Appleton & Co., and has been specially translated for this volume by J. W. Jeaffreson.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG FRENCHMAN STARTING FOR ENGLAND

YOU are going to dwell in a far country, remote not in miles (it is a shorter journey than from Paris to Lyons) but in ideas and customs. You are going to dwell in a difficult, mysterious land. During the first days you will think: "The attempt is hopeless; I shall never know them; they will never understand me; the gulf is too wide to be bridged." Rest easy. It can be bridged. Tell yourself that, once they have adopted you, they will be your staunchest friends. Read Lawrence's book *Revolt in the Desert*, and you will see how that Eng-

lishman went back alone into a dangerous desert to hunt for a nameless Arab left behind by the caravan. Such is the friendship of the best among them. I put it to the test during the War. It is worthy of being won, even at the cost of some effort. Think also that in spite of this apparent difficulty you need but observe a few rules in order not to affright them.

Clothes

Just two principles. Dress as they do; dress simply. As they do—because they are conformists. If you go golfing in riding-breeches, or if you turn up to dine at a regimental mess in knickerbockers, you will shock and sadden them. But you will shock them far more if you have the bad taste to be overdressed. Here, let no clothes be too perfect, no boots too new. Miss Harrison, in her *Reminiscences of a Student's Life,* tells of the pleasure she experienced on seeing the Duke of Devonshire come to receive the degree of doctor *honoris causa* at Cambridge in boots so "holy" that his socks showed through. "By those socks," she says, "I knew him for truly ducal." Do not think you should dress like the Englishman abroad. In London the Englishman ceases to be abroad; follow his lead and dress as in Paris.

Conversation

So long as you have not found your depth, speak little. Nobody will take your silence amiss. When you have held your tongue for three years, they will think: "This is a nice quiet young fellow." Be modest. An Englishman will tell you: "I've got a little place in the country"; when he invites you down, you will discover the little place to be a mansion with three hundred rooms. If you are world's champion at tennis, say: "Yes, I play a pretty fair game." If you have crossed the Atlantic all by yourself, say: "Yes, I do a little sailing." If you have written books, say nothing. They will themselves find out your qualities in time, and will say to you laughingly: "I have heard things about you"; they will be pleased with you. If you are treated unjustly (this will happen; unjust they occasionally are), go straight to them and explain wherein you think them in the wrong. The chances are they will admit it. They are keen on playing the game. If France is attacked in your presence, counter-attack brutally; you will go up one.

A golden rule: never ask questions. I lived six months in the same tent as an Englishman and shared his tub; he never inquired whether I was married, what I did in peace time, or what books I was reading. If you must tell your secrets, you will be listened to with polite indifference. Beware of confidences regarding others. Tittle-tattle exists

here as elsewhere, but it is both uncommoner and more serious. There is no mean between silence and scandal. Prefer silence.

Do not imagine your intellectual worth will bring you any prestige (except in a very small set in London and at the Universities). One thing only matters: your character. I do not think you can so much as conceive the contempt in which Englishmen of a certain type hold literary culture. You are going to a country where a man will frankly say to an author: "Books? I have never read a single one. When I try, I at once realize that nothing I read sticks. . . . So, what's the use?" However, they leave you free to read and chaff you gently if you do, much as one might chaff a collector of rhinoceros-horns. But they find the rhinoceros-taste more intelligible.

Last night I was endeavouring to converse with a young Englishman who had just finished his second year at Cambridge about the distinguished professors I know there. He had not even heard their names. "Of course," he said, "I took up rowing at once, and if you go in for it seriously, you live in a very restricted circle." Whereupon he inveighed against the latest generation, complaining that they had been spoiled by dancing and the light car and shirked working for their colleges. "Working" took me aback coming from his lips. I questioned him. He meant rugger. I felt reassured.

Side by side with the "athletic" you must get to know the "aesthetic" type. The classification is due to Jean Fayard: it is correct. In the small intellectual set to which I have referred, you will long feel at a disadvantage. Cultivated Englishmen are rare, but their culture is exquisite; their epigrams are swift and subtle, their taste fastidious and sound. They are contemptuous and delightful, a dangerous blend for your vanity. You will yearn to please them but will find it difficult to strike the right note. Seek for it in a mixture of nonchalance and preciosity. Write an essay on cocktails, another on the Chinese poets. Between them and you, supposing you read them aright, Proust may prove a solid bond. He is the one great Frenchman who comes near them. As for your reading, they will be your guides. I recommend you Forster, Virginia Woolf, David Garnett, and all the Sitwells. Maurice Baring's novels will furnish you with a true picture of this Racinian side of English society.

When you want to convince them, do not argue too well. Being a Frenchman, you will imagine you have scored completely having demonstrated that you are right. It leaves them cold whether logic shows them to be right or wrong. On the contrary, they mistrust too perfect reasoning. At Geneva, when our delegates handed them the protocol of disarmament, they rejected it because it was clear. "It will never work," they said. What they like is a policy which has stood the test of time, ancient maxims, and rooted habits. To induce them to do

something new, show them that they have been doing it all along. Put your logic out to grass during your whole stay.

Activity

Do not work too much. Above all do not be what they call "fussy." Wait till you are asked to do things. Do not with intemperate eagerness rush to meet your task. "Are they idlers?" you ask. Yes, somewhat; but their main idea is that the desire to do too much smacks of pride. See how they walk; rather slowly, with strides too long. Thus it is that they go ahead in life. They are not fond of hustling fate. In the army they always told me never to refuse a mission, but never to ask for one. They are ambitious like all men, but they are not bad at concealing it.

Justice

Do no murder in England. You would be hanged for it. With a French jury, provided you have a little imagination, a romantic face, and clever counsel, you can save your neck without much trouble. The twelve English jurors will listen with wrathful astonishment to the story of your sentimental pains and will cause you to be hanged by the neck until you be dead. It is true that a Frenchwoman arraigned for murder was acquitted by them; but then she had merely killed an Egyptian. Be prudent. Avoid their courts of law. Their judges are terrible and will hold you guilty before you have oped your mouth. Their barristers cross-examine with such diabolical skill that, in order to escape the hail of questions, you will confess to having taken Nelson's column. Bear in mind that respect for the law is greater here than elsewhere. In English, "Keep off the grass" does not mean *"Marchez sur ce gazon."*

Food

Before setting out you will have been told that food in England is bad. True, cooks and chefs are not up to the French mark. But if you know how to lay out your hunger wisely, you will manage to feed to perfection. Here there are two meals that are first-class: breakfast and tea; one that is middling: lunch; one that is bad: dinner. Reserve your appetite for the two former. Learn to experience new pleasures: porridge, haddock, marmalade. At lunch feed on the great red joint of beef or admirable rosy ham. Manfully thrust the pudding far from you saying firmly, "I don't care for sweets." In England every second shop is a "sweet" shop and yet Englishmen despise sweets. Leave them to children and women.

Adopt the beverages of the country. Of whisky they will tell you it is a "clean drink." That is true; it will leave your head clear, your tongue straight, and your body warmed. Their beers are good, but beware of drinking them as you would our beers of Northern France. During the War the Tommies would say to me wistfully: "You can't get boozed on French beer!" Perhaps it is true. But do not forget that a Frenchman can get tipsy on English beer. Accept their champagne; they know it well. Train yourself to drinking a cocktail before dinner, several wines during dinner, port after dinner, whisky at ten P. M.; you will make small headway in their esteem if you remain a water-drinker. Disraeli when negotiating with Bismarck forced himself to smoke although it made him ill. "In such circumstances," he said, "the man who does not smoke seems to be keeping watch on the other." Moreover you will take to it, and their port—very dry—is capital. But, above all, rejoice in the beholding of things. You will love the landscapes which look as if they had been painted by Constable or Gainsborough. You will love the gardens, which are a trifle wild, and the thick close-cropped lawns. You will love London which, amid its grey-gold haze, with the red smudges of its motor-buses and the dark smudges of its policemen, is like a huge Turner. You will love its theatres with their comfortable stalls, pretty attendants, and short intervals. You will love its book-shops, appetising and multicoloured as its shops full of exotic fruits, and especially will you love the books . . . only say it not.

* * *

BELGIUM

Introductory Note

THE literary life of Belgium has for the most part been overshadowed by that of France. Baudelaire, who lived for a time in Brussels, exercised a very great influence upon Belgian letters. Not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century were there any clear assertions of independence. At the present time the two outstanding figures are Maeterlinck and Verhaeren. These two have set a worthy example, and if writers of Belgium are able to follow it the immediate future should be bright for Belgian literature.

* * *

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

MAURICE MAETERLINCK was born at Ghent in 1862 and has passed most of his life on his Flemish estate. His plays are full of symbolism and few dramatists have been as successful in conveying an atmosphere. Vague terror and suspense; a sense of the mysterious unseen, and the haunting dread of inexorable death—all these are to be found in his work. The details of the plots are a secondary consideration. Among his plays are *La Princesse Maleine*, *L'Intruse*, *Les Aveugles*, *Les Spet Princesses*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *Monna Vanna*, *Marie Magdeleine*, *L'Oiseau Bleu*, and *Les Fiançailles*. He has also written intimate studies of nature and collections of essays, as for example *Le Trésor des Humbles*, *Le Sagesse et la Destinée*, and *Le Double Jardin*.

The following essay is taken from Mr. Alfred Sutro's translation, *The Treasure of the Humble*, by permission of the publishers, Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.

SILENCE

"SILENCE and Secrecy!" cries Carlyle. "Altars might still be raised to them (were this an altar-building time) for universal worship. Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together, that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of Life, which they are henceforth to rule. Not William the Silent only, but all the considerable men I have known, and the most undiplomatic and unstrategic of these, forbore to babble of what they were creating and projecting. Nay, in thy own mean perplexities, do thou

thyself but *hold thy tongue for one day;* on the morrow how much clearer are thy purposes and duties; what wreck and rubbish have these mute workmen within thee swept away, when intrusive noises were shut out! Speech is too often not, as the Frenchman defined it, the art of concealing Thought, but of quite stifling and suspending Thought, so that there is none to conceal. Speech, too, is great, but not the greatest. As the Swiss inscription says: *Sprechen ist Silbern, Schweigen ist Goldern* (Speech is silver, Silence is golden); or, as I might rather express it, Speech is of Time, Silence is of Eternity.

"Bees will not work except in darkness; Thought will not work except in Silence; neither will virtue work except in secrecy."

It is idle to think that, by means of words, any real communication can ever pass from one man to another. The lips of the tongue may represent the soul, even as a cipher or a number may represent a picture of Memling; but from the moment that we have *something to say to each other,* we are *compelled* to hold our peace: and if at such times we do not listen to the urgent demands of silence, invisible though they be, we shall have suffered an eternal loss that all the treasures of human wisdom cannot make good; for we shall have let slip the opportunity of listening to another soul, and of giving existence, be it only for an instant, to our own; and many lives there are in which such opportunities do not present themselves twice. . . .

It is only when life is sluggish within us that we speak: only at moments when reality lies far away, and we *do not wish* to be conscious of our brethren. And no sooner do we speak than something warns us that the divine gates are closing. Thus it comes about that we hug silence to us, and are very misers of it; and even the most reckless will not squander it on the first comer. There is an instinct of the superhuman truths within us which warns us that it is dangerous to be silent with one whom we do not wish to know, or do not love: for words may pass between men, but let silence have had its instant of activity, and it will never efface itself; and indeed the true life, the only life that leaves a trace behind, is made up of silence alone. Bethink it well, in that silence to which you must again have recourse, so that it may explain itself, by itself; and if it be granted to you to descend for one moment into your soul, into the depths where the angels dwell, it is not the words spoken by the creature you loved so dearly that you will recall, or the gestures that he made, but it is, above all, the silences that you have lived together that will come back to you: for it is the *quality* of those silences that alone revealed the quality of your love and your souls.

So far I have considered *active* silence only, for there is a *passive* silence, which is the shadow of sleep, of death or non-existence. It is the silence of lethargy, and is even less to be dreaded than speech, so

long as it slumbers; but beware lest a sudden incident awake it, for then would its brother, the great active silence, at once rear himself upon his throne. Be on your guard. Two souls would draw near each other: the barriers would fall asunder, the gates fly open, and the life of every day be replaced by a life of deepest earnest, wherein all are defenceless; a life in which laughter dares not show itself, in which there is no obeying, in which nothing can evermore be forgotten. . . .

And it is because we all of us know of this sombre power and its perilous manifestations, that we stand in so deep a dread of silence. We can bear, when need must be, the silence of ourselves, that of isolation: but the silence of many—silence multiplied—and above all the silence of a crowd—these are supernatural burdens, whose inexplicable weight brings dread to the mightiest soul. We spend a goodly portion of our lives in seeking places where silence is not. No sooner have two or three men met than their one thought is to drive away the invisible enemy; and of how many ordinary friendships may it not be said that their only foundation is the common hatred of silence! And if, all efforts notwithstanding, it contrives to steal among a number of men, disquiet will fall upon them, and their restless eyes will wander in the mysterious direction of things unseen: and each man will hurriedly go his way, flying before the intruder: and henceforth they will avoid each other, dreading lest a similar disaster should again befall them, and suspicious as to whether there be no one among them who would treacherously throw open the gate to the enemy. . . .

In the lives of most of us, it will not happen more than twice or thrice that silence is really understood and freely admitted. It is only on the most solemn occasions that the inscrutable guest is welcomed; but, when such come about, there are few who do not make the welcome worthy, for even in the lives of the most wretched there are moments when they know how to act, even as though they knew already that which is known to the gods. Remember the day on which, without fear in your heart, you met your first silence. The dread hour had sounded; silence went before your soul; you saw it rising from the depths of the inner sea of horror or beauty, and you did not fly. . . . It was at a home-coming, on the threshold of a departure, in the midst of a great joy, at the pillow of a death-bed, on the approach of a dire misfortune. Bethink you of those moments when all the secret jewels shone forth on you, and the slumbering truths sprung to life, and tell me whether silence, then, was not good and necessary, whether the caresses of the enemy you had so persistently shunned were not truly divine? The kisses of the silence of misfortune—and it is above all at times of misfortune that silence caresses us—can never be forgotten; and therefore it is that those to whom they have come more often than to others are worthier than those others. They alone know, perhaps, how voiceless

and unfathomable are the waters on which the fragile shell of daily life reposes: they have approached nearer to God, and the steps they have taken towards the light are steps that can never be lost, for the soul may not rise, perhaps, but it can never sink. . . . "Silence, the great Empire of Silence," says Carlyle again—he who understood so well the empire of the life which holds us—"higher than the stars, deeper than the Kingdom of Death! . . . Silence, and the great silent men! . . . Scattered here and there, each in his department; silently thinking, silently working; whom no morning newspaper makes mention of! They are the salt of the earth. A country that has none or few of these is in a bad way. Like a forest which had no *roots;* which had all turned to leaves and boughs; which must soon wither and be no forest."

But the real silence, which is greater still and more difficult of approach than the material silence of which Carlyle speaks—the real silence is not one of those gods that can desert mankind. It surrounds us on every side; it is the source of the undercurrents of our life; and let one of us but knock, with trembling fingers, at the door of the abyss, it is always by the same attentive silence that this door will be opened.

It is a thing that knows no limit, and before it all men are equal; and the silence of king or slave, in presence of death, or grief, or love, reveals the same features, hides beneath its impenetrable mantle the self-same treasure. For this is the essential silence of our soul, our most inviolable sanctuary, and its secret can never be lost; and, were the first born of men to meet the last inhabitant of the earth, a kindred impulse would sway them, and they would be voiceless in their caresses, in their terror and their tears; a kindred impulse would sway them, and all that could be said without falsehood would call for no spoken word: and, the centuries notwithstanding, there would come to them, at the same moment as though one cradle had held them both, comprehension of that which the tongue shall not learn to tell before the world ceases. . . .

No sooner are the lips still than the soul awakes, and sets forth on its labours; for silence is an element that is full of surprise, danger, and happiness, and in these the soul possesses itself in freedom. If it be indeed your desire to give yourself over to another, be silent; and if you fear being silent with him—unless this fear be the proud uncertainty, or hunger, of the love that yearns for prodigies—fly from him, for your soul knows well how far it may go. There are men in whose presence the greatest of heroes would not dare to be silent; and even the soul that has nothing to conceal trembles lest another should discover its secret. Some there are that have no silence, and that kill the silence around them, and these are the only creatures that pass

through life unperceived. To them it is not given to cross the zone of revelation, the great zone of the firm and faithful light. We cannot conceive what sort of man is he who has never been silent. It is to us as though his soul were featureless. "We do not know each other yet," wrote to me one whom I hold dear above all others, "we have not yet dared to be silent together." And it was true: already did we love each other so deeply that we shrank from the superhuman ordeal. And each time that silence fell upon us—the angel of the supreme truth, the messenger that brings to the heart the tidings of the unknown—each time did we feel that our souls were craving mercy on their knees, were begging for a few hours of ignorance, a few hours of childhood. . . . And none the less must its hour come. It is the sun of love, and it ripens the fruit of the soul, as the sun of heaven ripens the fruits of the earth. But it is not without cause that men fear it; for none can ever tell what will be the *quality* of the silence which is about to fall upon them. Though all words may be akin, every silence differs from its fellow; and, with rare exceptions, it is an entire destiny that will be governed by the *quality* of this first silence which is descending upon two souls. They blend: we know not where, for the reservoirs of silence lie far above the reservoirs of thought, and the strange resultant brew is either sinisterly bitter or profoundly sweet. Two souls, admirable both and of equal power, may yet give birth to a hostile silence, and wage pitiless war against each other in the darkness; while it may be that the soul of a convict shall go forth and commune in divine silence with the soul of a virgin. The result can never be foretold; all this comes to pass in a heaven that never warns; and therefore it is that the tenderest of lovers will often defer to the last hour of all the solemn entry of the great revealer of the depths of our being. . . .

For they too are well aware—the love that is truly love brings the most frivolous back to life's centre—they too are well aware that all that had gone before was but as children playing outside the gates, and that it is now that the walls are falling and existence lying bare. Their silence will be even as are the gods within them; and if in this first silence, there be not harmony, there can be no love in their souls, for the silence will never change. It may rise or it may fall between two souls, but *its nature* can never alter; and even until the death of the lovers will it retain the form, the attitude, and the power that were its own when, for the first time, it came into the room.

As we advance through life, it is more and more brought home to us that nothing takes place that is not in accord with some curious, preconceived design: and of this we never breathe a word, we scarcely dare to let our minds dwell upon it, but of its existence, somewhere above our heads, we are absolutely convinced. The most fatuous of

men smiles, at the first encounters, as though he were the accomplice of the destiny of his brethren. And in this domain, even those who can speak the most profoundly realize—they, perhaps, more than others—that words can never express the real, special relationship that exists between two beings. Were I to speak to you at this moment of the gravest things of all—of love, death, or destiny—it is not love, death, or destiny that I should touch; and, my efforts notwithstanding, there would always remain between us a truth which had not been spoken, which we had not even thought of speaking; and yet it is this truth only, voiceless though it has been, which will have lived with us for an instant, and by which we shall have been wholly absorbed. For that truth was *our truth* as regards death, destiny, or love, and it was in silence only that we could perceive it. And nothing save only the silence will have had any importance. "My sisters," says a child in the fairy-story, "you have each of you a secret thought—I wish to know it." We, too, have something that people wish to know, but it is hidden far above the secret thought—it is our secret silence. But all questions are useless. When our spirit is alarmed, its own agitation becomes a barrier to the second life that lives in this secret; and, would we know what it is that lies hidden there, we must cultivate silence among ourselves, for it is then only that for one instant the eternal flowers unfold their petals, the mysterious flowers whose form and colour are ever changing in harmony with the soul that is by their side. As gold and silver are weighed in pure water, so does the soul test its weight in silence, and the words that we let fall have no meaning apart from the silence that wraps them round. If I tell some one that I love him—as I may have told a hundred others—my words will convey nothing to him; but the silence which will ensue, if I do indeed love him, will make clear in what depths lie the roots of my love, and will in its turn give birth to a conviction, that shall itself be silent; and in the course of a lifetime, this silence and this conviction will never again be the same. . . .

Is it not silence that determines and fixes the savour of love? Deprived of it, love would lose its eternal essence and perfume. Who has not known those silent moments which separated the lips to reunite the souls? It is these that we must ever seek. There is no silence more docile than the silence of love, and it is indeed the only one that we may claim for ourselves alone. The other great silences, those of death, grief, or destiny, do not belong to us. They come towards us at their own hour, following in the track of events, and those whom they do not meet need not reproach themselves. But we can all go forth to meet the silences of love. They lie in wait for us, night and day, at our threshold, and are no less beautiful than their brothers. And it is thanks to them that those who have seldom wept may know

the life of the soul almost as intimately as those to whom much grief has come: and therefore it is that such of us as have loved deeply have learnt many secrets that are unknown to others: for thousands and thousands of things quiver in silence on the lips of true friendship and love, that are not to be found in the silence of other lips, to which friendship and love are unknown. . . .

* * *

ITALY

Introductory Note

THE apparent suddenness of the conversion which led Boccaccio from writing the *Decameron* to take up the study of theology and prompted Botticelli to turn from painting Venus to the contemplation of the Madonna is not so irrational as it may seem. The two extremes proceed from the same cause and, like two threads of strongly contrasting colours, they may be traced in all Italian art and literature. Boccaccio has himself provided the explanation in the famous introduction to the *Decameron*. Seven ladies and three gentlemen, assembled in Florence under the dread shadow of the plague, resolved to quit the stricken city and in a chosen retreat to while away the time in the telling of diverting tales. The plague, we may be sure, was never absent from their minds. The very nature of their device was a tribute to its power. And the stories themselves suggested that as life was so uncertain it should be filled with merriment.

Italian history shows that pestilence and civil discord have been the writer's unvarying background. His one relief from trouble at home was exile abroad. Human life was cheap and fortune extremely fickle. Small wonder was it then that he varied between the extremes of earnestness and buffoonery, or that he strove to mask his heartache and apprehension in light raillery that descended at times to licence.

These are not the conditions in which essays of the English type flourish. There is tragedy in every life, as Charles Lamb knew well enough, but a certain measure of stability in the foundations of one's existence is essential to the production of those whimsical and discursive flights of imagination which are so marked a feature of our own literature. The fact that England achieved unity in the thirteenth century whereas Italy had to wait until recent times for that consummation is reflected in certain radical differences between the two literatures.

If then the Italian tale, as represented in the *Decameron*, is boisterous and irresponsible, the Italian essay is serious and filled with a keen realization of the sadness of things. The easy and assured condition which gives savour to a quiet chuckle and promotes a benevolent tolerance has almost invariably been wanting. Added to that, Italian prose has been strongly influenced by the legacy it has received direct from Rome. Law, history, and philosophy have been its primary concerns, and to-day writers like Croce, Soffici, and Gentile are main-

taining that tradition. A note of high seriousness is never absent from their work.

* * *

DINO COMPAGNI

COMPAGNI was born about the year 1257 and took a prominent part in the affairs which he describes in his *Chronicle*. As an active member of the White party he was forced to leave public life and live in retirement when the Black party took office. He probably wrote his *Chronicle* in 1311-1312 and died in 1324.

The following passage is taken from the translation by Else C. M. Benecke and A. G. Ferrers Howell in the Temple Classics by permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

FLORENCE

WHEN I began, I purposed writing the truth concerning those things of which I was certain, through having seen and heard them, because they were things noteworthy, which in their beginnings no one saw so clearly as I; and those things I did not clearly see, I purposed writing according to hearsay. But since many, because of their corrupt wills, err in their speech, and corrupt the truth, I purposed to write according to the most authentic report. And in order that strangers may be the better able to understand the things that happened, I will describe the fashion of the noble city which is in the province of Tuscany and under the protection of the sign of Mars. It is enriched by a copious imperial river of sweet water, which divides it almost in half. The climate is equable, and the city is sheltered from hurtful winds; its territory is scanty in extent, but abounds in good produce. The citizens are valiant in arms, proud, and quarrelsome. The city is enriched by unlawful gains, and, on account of its power, is distrusted and feared, rather than loved, by the neighbouring towns. Pisa is 40 miles distant from Florence, Lucca 40 miles, Pistoja 20 miles, Bologna 58 miles, Arezzo 40 miles, Siena 30 miles, San Miniato 20 miles towards Pisa, Prato 10 miles towards Pistoja, Monte Accencio 22 miles towards Bologna, Fighine 16 miles towards Arezzo, Poggibonsi 16 miles towards Siena. As to all the aforesaid towns, with many other fortresses and villages—and in all the directions aforesaid, there are many nobles—counts and captains—who love rather to see the city in discord than in peace, and who obey her more from fear than love.

The said city of Florence is very well populated, and the good air

promotes generation. The citizens are very courteous, and the women very handsome and well attired. The large houses are very beautiful, and better supplied with comforts and conveniences than those in the other cities of Italy. On this account many people come from distant lands to visit the city, not from necessity, but by reason of her flourishing industries, and for the sake of her beauty and adornment.

Let her citizens, then, weep for themselves and their children, since by their arrogance, wickedness, and struggles for office they have undone so noble a city, have outraged the laws, and in a short time have bartered away the privileges which their forefathers won by much labour through long years; and let them await the justice of God, which by many tokens is threatening to bring evil upon them, as upon guilty persons who were free to avoid the possibility of its overwhelming them.

After much hurt had been received in ancient times through the quarrels of the citizens, there arose in the said city one quarrel which caused such division among them that the two parties gave, one to the other, the two new hostile names of Guelfs and Ghibellines. And the cause of this, in Florence, was as follows: A young citizen of noble birth, named Buondelmonte de' Buondelmonti, had promised to marry a daughter of Messer Oderigo Giantruffetti. One day afterwards, as he was passing the houses of the Donati, a lady, by name Madonna Aldruda, wife of M. Forteguerra Donati, who had two very beautiful daughters, saw him from the balcony of her palace as he was passing, called him, and showed him one of her daughters. Then she said to him, "Whom hast thou promised to marry? I was keeping this my daughter for thee." When Buondelmonte looked at the girl, she pleased him well; but he answered, "I cannot do otherwise now." But the lady Aldruda said, "Yes, thou canst, since I will pay the penalty for thee"; and Buondelmonte answered, "Then I will have her." So he was affianced to her, forsaking the other to whom he had plighted his troth. Wherefore M. Oderigo complained of this to his kinsmen and friends, and they determined to be revenged, and to beat Buondelmonte and do him shame. But when the Uberti, a very noble and powerful family, kinsmen of M. Oderigo, heard this, they said they wished Buondelmonte to be killed, "for" (said they) "the hatred caused by his being killed will be no greater than that caused by his being wounded; a thing done cannot be undone." So they arranged to slay him on the day he should bring home his bride; and so they did. There was therefore a division amongst the citizens on account of this murder, and the friends and kinsmen of each party banded themselves so closely together, that the division was never healed, whence arose many dissensions, murders, and fights between the citizens.

* * *

DANTE ALIGHIERI

DANTE, the father of Italian literature, was born at Florence in 1265. He belonged to the noble family of Alighieri and, receiving the best education which was available, he became an accomplished scholar. It was not long before he threw himself into the struggle for mastery between the Guelph and Ghibelline factions on behalf of the former, to which his family had always been attached. He became chief magistrate of Florence, but his opponents, in his absence, roused popular feeling against him and he was condemned to exile. Nineteen years he spent in wandering from one place to another, practically dependent upon charity. During this time he composed the *Divina Commedia*. He died at Ravenna in 1331. In earlier years he had written some prose works in Latin among which were *De Monarchia*, from which the present extract is taken. It is noteworthy that the main ideas of the treatise which he wrote in the time of his prosperity can be traced in the great poem which he composed in the days of ignominy and exile.

The translation used is that of the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed and is reprinted here from the Temple Classics edition by permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

FREEDOM

THE human race when most free is best disposed. This will be clear if the principle of freedom be understood. Wherefore be it known that the first principle of our freedom is freedom of choice, which many have on their lips but few in their understanding. For they get as far as saying that free choice is free judgment in matters of will; and herein they say the truth; but the import of the words is far from them, just as is the case with our teachers of logic in their constant use of certain propositions, given by way of example in Logic; for instance, "A triangle has three angles equal to two right angles."

Therefore I say that judgment is the link between apprehension and appetite. For first a thing is apprehended, then when apprehended it is judged to be good or bad, and finally he who has so judged it pursues or shuns it. If, then, the judgment altogether sets the appetite in motion, and is in no measure anticipated by it, it is free. But if the judgment is moved by the appetite, which to some extent anticipates it, it cannot be free, for it does not move of itself, but is drawn captive by another. And hence it is that brutes cannot have free judgment because their judgments are always anticipated by appetite. And hence too it may be seen that the intellectual substances whose

wills are immutable, and separated souls departing from this life in grace, do not lose their freedom of choice because of the immutability of their wills, but retain it in its most perfect and potent form.

When we see this we may further understand that this freedom (or this principle of all our freedom) is the greatest gift conferred by God on human nature; for through it we have our felicity here as men, through it we have our felicity elsewhere as deities. And if this be so, who would not agree that the human race is best disposed when it has fullest use of this principle? But it is under a monarch that it is most free. As to which we must know that that is free which exists "for the sake of itself and not of some other," as the Philosopher has it in his work, *De Simpliciter Ente*. For that which exists for the sake of something else is conditioned by that for the sake of which it exists, as a road is conditioned by the goal. It is only when a monarch is reigning that the human race exists for its own sake, and not for the sake of something else. For it is only then that perverted forms of government are made straight, to wit democracies, oligarchies, and tyrannies, which force the human race into slavery, (as is obvious to whosoever runs through them all), and that government is conducted by kings, aristocrats (whom they call *optimates*), and zealots for the people's liberty. For since the monarch has love of men in the highest degree, as already indicated, he will desire all men to be made good, which cannot be under perverted rulers. Whence the Philosopher in his *Politics* says, "Under a perverted government a good man is a bad citizen, but under a right one, a good man and a good citizen are convertible terms." And such right governments purpose freedom, to wit that men should exist for their own sakes. For the citizens are not there for the sake of the consuls, nor the nation for the sake of the king, but conversely, the consuls for the sake of the citizens, the king for the sake of the nation. For just as the body politic is not established for the benefit of the laws, but the laws for the benefit of the body politic, so too they who live under the law are not ordained for the benefit of the legislator, but rather he for theirs, as saith the Philosopher again in what has been left by him on the present matter. Hence it is clear that, albeit the consul or king be masters of the rest as regards the way, yet as regards the end they are their servants; and the monarch most of all, for he must assuredly be regarded as the servant of all. Hence it may begin to appear at this point how the monarch is conditioned in laying down the laws by the end set before him.

Therefore the human race is best disposed when under a monarchy. Whence it follows that for the well-being of the world the existence of a monarchy is necessary.

* * *

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

Boccaccio was born in 1313, whether at Paris or at Florence it is not quite certain. He lived now at Florence and now at Naples, composing prose tales, poems, and pastorals. Later he became acquainted with Petrarch and, as Florentine ambassador, visited Rome, Ravenna, Avignon, and Brandenburg. He completed the collection of tales known as the *Decameron* in 1358. This book has had a far-reaching effect upon European literature, and writers of all classes and nationalities have borrowed from the treasury of the hundred tales. It should be noted that just as Dante had shown that Italian verse could convey the loftiest and most impassioned thought of which the mind was capable, so Boccaccio demonstrated that Italian prose was a flexible and adequate medium equal to all the demands that could be made upon it. Boccaccio died in 1375.

The following description of the plague which devastated Florence in 1348 forms part of the introduction to the *Decameron* and is considered to be Boccaccio's finest achievement in prose.

THE PLAGUE

IN THE year of our Lord 1348, there happened at Florence, the finest city in all Italy, a most terrible plague; which whether owing to the influence of the planets, or that it was sent from God as a just punishment for our sins, had broken out some years before in the Levant; and after passing from place to place, and making incredible havoc all the way, had now reached the West; where, spite of all the means that art and human foresight could suggest, as keeping the city clear from filth, and excluding all suspected persons; notwithstanding frequent consultations what else was to be done; nor omitting prayers to God in frequent processions: in the spring of the foregoing year, it began to show itself in a sad and wonderful manner; and, different from what it had been in the East, where bleeding from the nose is the fatal prognostic, here, there appeared certain tumours in the groins, or under the arm-pits, some as big as a small apple, others as an egg; and afterwards purple spots in most parts of the body: in some cases large and but few in number, in others less and more numerous, both sorts the usual messengers of death. To the cure of this malady, neither medical knowledge, nor the power of drugs was of any effect; whether because the disease was in its own nature mortal, or that the physicians (the number of whom, taking quacks and women pretenders into the account was grown very great) could form no just idea of the cause, nor consequently ground a true method of cure; which ever was the reason,

few or none escaped; but they generally died the third day from the first appearance of the symptoms, without a fever or other bad circumstance attending. And the disease by being communicated from the sick to the well, seemed daily to get ahead, and to rage the more as fire will do, by laying on fresh combustibles. Nor was it given by conversing with only, or coming near the sick, but even by touching their clothes, or anything that they had before touched. It is wonderful, what I am going to mention; which had I not seen it with my own eyes, and were there not many witnesses to attest it besides myself, I should never venture to relate, however credibly I might have been informed about it; such I say, was the quality of the pestilential matter, as to pass not only from man to man, but, what is more strange, and has been often known, that anything belonging to the infected, if touched by any other creature, would certainly infect, and even kill that creature in a short space of time; and one instance of this kind I took particular notice of; namely, that the rags of a poor man just dead, being thrown into the street, and two hogs coming by at the same time, and rooting amongst them, and shaking them about in their mouths, in less than an hour turned round, and died on the spot. These accidents, and others of the like sort, occasioned various fears and devices amongst those people that survived, all tending to the same uncharitable, and cruel end; which was, to avoid the sick, and everything that had been near them; expecting by that means to save themselves. And some holding it best to live temperately, and to avoid excesses of all kinds, made parties, and shut themselves up from the rest of the world; eating and drinking moderately of the best, and diverting themselves with music, and such other entertainments as they might have within doors; never listening to anything from without, to make them uneasy. Others maintained free living to be a better preservative, and would baulk no passion or appetite they wished to gratify, drinking and revelling incessantly from tavern to tavern, or in private houses, which were frequently found deserted by the owners, and therefore common to every one; yet avoiding, with all this irregularity, to come near the infected. And such, at that time was the public distress, that the laws, human or divine, were not regarded; for the officers, to put them in force, being either dead, sick, or in want of persons to assist them; every one did just as he pleased. A third sort of people chose a method between these two; not confining themselves to rules of diet like the former, and yet avoiding the intemperance of the latter; but eating and drinking what their appetites required, they walked everywhere with odours and nosegays to smell to; as holding it best to corroborate the brain: for they supposed the whole atmosphere to be tainted with the stink of dead bodies, arising partly from the distemper itself, and partly from the fermenting of the medicines within them. Others of a more cruel disposition, as perhaps the more safe to themselves, declared, that the

only remedy was to avoid it: persuaded, therefore of this, and taking care for themselves only, men and women in great numbers left the city, their houses, relations, and effects, and fled into the country: as if the wrath of God had been restrained to visit those only within the walls of the city; or else concluding, that none ought to stay in a place thus doomed to destruction. Divided as they were, neither did all die nor all escape; but falling sick indifferently, as well those of one as of another opinion; they who first set the example by forsaking others, now languished themselves, without mercy. I pass over the little regard that citizens and relations showed to each other; for their terror was such, that a brother even fled from his brother, a wife from her husband, and what is more uncommon, a parent from its own child. On which account numbers that fell sick could have no help but what the charity of friends, who were very few, or the avarice of servants supplied; and even these were scarce, and at extravagant wages, and so little used to the business, that they were only fit to reach what was called for, and observe when they died; and this desire of getting money often cost them their lives.

From this desertion of friends, and scarcity of servants, an unheard of custom prevailed; no lady, however young or handsome, would disdain being attended by a man-servant, whether young or old it mattered not; and to expose herself naked to him, the necessity of the distemper requiring it, as though it was to a woman; which might make those who recovered, less modest for the time to come. And many lost their lives, who might have escaped, had they been looked after at all. So that, between the scarcity of servants, and violence of the distemper, such numbers were continually dying, as made it terrible to hear as well as to behold. Whence, from mere necessity, many customs were introduced, different from what had been before known in the city. It had been usual, as it now is for the women who were friends and neighbours to the deceased, to meet together at his house, and to lament with his relations; at the same time the men would get together at the door, with a number of clergy, according to the person's circumstances; and the corpse was carried by people of his own rank, with the solemnity of tapers and singing, to that church where the person had desired to be buried; which custom was now laid aside, and, so far from having a crowd of women to lament over them, that great numbers passed out of the world without a single person: and few had the tears of their friends at their departure; but those friends would laugh, and make themselves merry; for even the women had learned to postpone every other concern to that of their own lives. Nor was a corpse attended by more than ten, or a dozen, nor those citizens of credit, but fellows hired for the purpose; who would put themselves under the bier, and carry it with all possible haste to the nearest church;

and the corpse was interred, without any great ceremony, where they could find room.

With regard to the lower sort, and many of a middling rank, the scene was still more affecting; for they, staying at home either through poverty, or hopes of succour in distress, fell sick daily by thousands, and, having nobody to attend them, generally died: some breathed their last in the streets, and others shut up in their own houses, when the stench that came from them, made the first discovery of their deaths to the neighbourhood. And, indeed, every place was filled with the dead. A method now was taken, as well out of regard to the living, as pity for the dead, for the neighbours, assisted by what porters they could meet with, to clear all the houses, and lay the bodies at the doors; and every morning great numbers might be seen brought out in this manner; from whence they were carried away on biers, or tables, two or three at a time; and some times it has happened, that a wife and her husband, two or three brothers, and a father and son, have been laid on together: it has been observed also, whilst two or three priests have walked before a corpse with their crucifix, that two or three sets of porters have fallen in with them; and where they knew but of one, they have buried six, eight, or more: nor was there any to follow, and shed a few tears over them; for things were come to that pass, that men's lives were no more regarded than the lives of so many beasts. Hence it plainly appeared, that what the wisest in the ordinary course of things, and by a common train of calamities, could never be taught, namely, to bear them patiently; this, by the excess of those calamities, was now grown a familiar lesson to the most simple and unthinking. The consecrated ground no longer containing the numbers which were continually brought thither, especially as they were desirous of laying every one in the parts allotted to their families; they were forced to dig trenches, and to put them in by hundreds, piling them up in rows, as goods are stowed in a ship, and throwing in little earth till they were filled to the top. Not to rake any farther into the particulars of our misery, I shall observe, that it fared no better with the adjacent country; for to omit the different castles about us, which presented the same view in miniature with the city, you might see the poor distressed labourers, with their families, without either the plague or physicians, or help of servants, languishing on the highways, in the fields, and in their own houses, and dying rather like cattle than human creatures; and growing dissolute in their manners like the citizens, and careless of everything, as supposing every day to be their last, their thoughts were not so much employed how to improve, as to make use of their substance for their present support: whence it happened that the flocks, herds, etc., and the dogs themselves, ever faithful to their masters, being driven from their own homes, would wander, no regard being had to them, among the forsaken harvest; and many times, after they had

filled themselves in the day, would return of their own accord like rational creatures at night. What can I say more, if I return to the city? unless that such was the cruelty of Heaven, and perhaps of men, that between March and July following, it is supposed, and made pretty certain, that upwards of a hundred thousand souls perished in the city only; whereas, before that calamity, it was not supposed to have contained so many inhabitants. What magnificent dwellings, what noble palaces were then depopulated to the last person! what families extinct! what riches and vast possessions left, and no known heir to inherit! what numbers of both sexes in the prime and vigour of youth, whom in the morning neither Galen, Hippocrates, nor Æsculapius himself, but would have declared in perfect health; after dining heartily with their friends here, have supped with their departed friends in the other world!

* * *

FRANCESCO PETRARCH

PETRARCH's father had been a friend of Dante and had shared his exile. Petrarch himself was born in 1304. Like Dante he was a keen classical scholar and wrote much prose in Latin. His lyric poems, upon which his fame rests to-day, were written in Italian. They were written in honour of Laura, the wife of a nobleman of Avignon, whom Petrarch met when he was twenty-three. These poems became models for the poets of all European countries. In his own day Petrarch achieved fame such as seldom falls to the poet's lot. He was crowned at Rome as poet laureate and honours of all kinds were showered upon him. He died in 1374.

The following passage is taken from a translation of Petrarch's *View of Human Life* made by Mrs. Dobson in 1797.

YOUTH AND BEAUTY

O HOW joyful are the days of youth! the days of youth are mine. My years are flourishing; I shall yet live a long time! A vain joy and a short: while ye be speaking your flower fadeth—My age is sound—Who will call that sound, of which what remaineth is uncertain? But there is a certain proposed time and law of living. Who made that law? Not he that received it; with the giver it resteth, even with God. But the lives of young men are more assured, in that they are further off from old age, and so from death. Thou art deceived; that is the most dangerous part of life which much carelessness maketh unadvised; there is nothing nearer than death to life, even when they seem the furthest asunder. Well, at the least wise, Youth is now present, and

Age absent. In darkness and silence creepeth Age softly in, and standeth at the door, striking unawares. But mine age is now rising. To those that enter, years seem infinite; to those who depart, nothing. Mine age is nothing spent. How is that unspent which wasteth every moment? The Heavens turn about with perpetual motion; minutes consume hours, and hours the day; that day thrusteth forth another, so time fleeth away; but, as Virgil says, never seemeth to wag her swift wings. As those that go in ships come to their voyage end before they be aware, so within the space of this short life, nothing is far off. But there is no part further from the end than the beginning. None indeed, if all men lived like space of time; but even little children end when scarcely begun. I am far past their danger. Time is the chariot of all ages to carry men away, and beauty cannot bribe this charioteer. If it could, he would have no power over me; for my beauty is singular. It will prove singular indeed, if the frost does not nip it, or the wind beat it down, if it is not pinched with the nail of some enemy's hand, or demolished by the rough heel of some sickness passing by: neither doth the delight it bringeth equal the horror that oft ensues at its departure, as the beautiful Roman Prince Domitian proved; for he whose form was most admirable, and who vied in height with the lofty cedar, and did at first give great promise of modesty, temperance, and sweetness; he who published some good laws, embellished Rome with stately edifices, re-established the libraries that were consumed, and was successful against the northern nations, yet became such a monster of cruelty and debauchery, and signalized himself, so to speak, in barbarity, that he was killed by the freed man of his wife Domitia. From this example let the most promising youth beware of the pride of beauty; let him direct his course safe and straight through virtue; for short is the process of youth, and in it is to be learnt the art of so holding transitory delights as to depart from them willingly, which cannot continue with you long, and to forsake them in heart before they forsake you in reality. But suppose the contrary, that beauty doth remain, what is this glittering beauty? It is only the uppermost part of the mere body, a simple and slight overcasting of the skin. A veil for the eyes, a snare for the feet, a depression of the mind, its hindrance from achieving honest exploits and turning it to the contrary. Yet is this beauty of the body most sweet and wonderful! Thou dost say well; the vanity of it is astonishing! what travels does it sustain, what comforts forego, what punishments suffer, what health, what time is lost, what worthy and profitable labours are neglected for this vain beauty; to set it forth what pinching of the feet, twisting of the curls, gorging at one season, for having been obliged to fast, in order to get time for trimming and decking at another, and tricking out the body with the nicer care; an enemy at home, ever corroding thy mind, provoking it to unmanly trifles or unlawful pas-

sions, and consequently to suspicion, hatred, and jealousy. As to jealousy in wedlock, beauty is the firebrand that doth light it into flames; so that it doth plainly appear, that while nothing is coveted more forcibly, nothing is suspected more vehemently. I will endeavour that my beauty shall be adorned with honesty; if thou dost bring that about, then shalt thou be indeed renowned; if thou dost use this ensnaring beauty to the advancement of thy modesty, thy sobriety, and thy chastity, thy virtue shall be acceptable to all men; nay, by this thou shalt merit, and by this alone thou canst merit a true and worthy affection, that refiner of the mind—that stay of the heart of youth.

* * *

SAN BERNARDINO OF SIENA

San Bernardino was born in 1380 and is famous on account of his restoration of the primitive rigour of the Franciscan rule. He died in 1444 and was canonized in 1450. He wrote several books, all of a mystical nature.

The following passage is taken from Ada Harrison's *Examples of San Bernardino of Siena* by permission of Messrs. Gerald Howe, Ltd., and The Oxford University Press, American Branch.

THE LIFE OF MAN

WHAT does the morning signify in the life of man? It signifies infancy, which is like a tender plant—the time when you are a child. O Children, you have something that your elders will not have again. For this I tell you, both young and old, in life there is no turning back; if you are old, you will never grow young again. This I say to you, O Woman. You will never be a girl again, lovely and gay and handsome as you once were! If you have lived a bad life, you can turn back and mend it and leave evil ways; but in years there is no turning back. And you, O man, when you are come to eighteen years you are gallant and fresh and lusty and merry, and that is called the flower of your youth, and lasts until you are thirty. All the time you live there is no happier, merrier time than this; therefore David called it the flower of life. When thirty years are passed, evening begins, and goes on until the age of forty. Then certain servitors begin to wait upon you—Sir Greybeard, and others with other messengers. *Induret et arescat.* You begin to grow stiff and the sap dries. Then from forty to sixty years a man begins to shrink and become bowed, his eyes grow red and rheumy. He goes with his head bent towards earth; he becomes deaf; he cannot plainly see the light; he loses his teeth. When he comes to seventy or eighty years, palsy begins to seize him and his

head shakes. When his wine is given him, he takes it and his hand trembles and half of it is spilt before he can put his hand to the cup; and when he has it at his lips and begins to drink, then spittle falls into the wine. So too when he takes his soup. He puts the bread to his lips, and the trembling of his hands makes him smear all his mouth and chin. When some one speaks to him, and he is deaf, he stares like a person amazed and thunderstruck. You ask him one question and he answers another.

And so he comes to his end. As he lived so he dies. If he has lived well, it will be well for him, and if he has lived ill, it will be ill. If his life has been evil here, then it will be still worse beyond. If he has been discontented, sinful, and has forgotten to fear God, nobody on earth will have made him welcome, neither his flesh and blood, nor his acquaintance: no one will have been glad to see him, but rather sorry. And the same when he passes from here. Neither God nor the saints will have pity on him, and thus he loses all the good that might have been his reward if he had been righteous, and his soul goes to an accursed home.

But if he has lived well, shown himself a man of upright ways, feared God, borne his troubles without complaint, and not yielded to rebelliousness or impatience, when he dies every saint will pity him, and with jubilee and rejoicing he will be received into the house of God and heavenly glory.

* * *

LEONARDO DA VINCI

THE great artist, who was born in 1452, spoke of himself as "unlettered," yet his name is one of great significance in Italian literature. His writings consist of a mass of notes on all manner of subjects. His thirst for knowledge was insatiable and no branch of learning seemed to be beyond his ken. It was to his credit that he was able to fashion Italian prose into an instrument for conveying with clarity and exactness ideas and observations upon so many different themes. Leonardo died in 1519.

The following passage from the *Note Books* is taken from Edward McCurdy's edition by permission of the publishers, Messrs. Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd.

OF LIFE AND DEATH

O THOU that sleepest, what is sleep? Sleep is an image of death. Oh, why not let your work be such that after death you become an image of immortality; as in life you become when sleeping like unto the hapless dead.

Every evil leaves a sorrow in the memory except the supreme evil, death, and this destroys memory itself together with life.

As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so life well used brings happy death.

While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die.

The age as it flies glides secretly and deceives one and another; nothing is more fleeting than the years, but he who sows virtue reaps honour.

Iron rusts from disuse; stagnant water loses its purity and in cold weather becomes frozen; even so does inaction sap the vigour of the mind.

Life well spent is long.

In rivers, the water that you touch is the last of what has passed and the first of that which comes: so with time present.

Wrongfully do men lament the flight of time, accusing it of being too swift, and not perceiving that its period is yet sufficient; but good memory wherewith nature has endowed us causes everything long past to seem present.

Our judgment does not reckon in their exact and proper order things which have come to pass at different periods of time; for many things which happened many years ago will seem nearly related to the present, and many things that are recent will seem ancient, extending back to the far-off period of our youth. And so it is with the eye, with regard to distant things, which when illumined by the sun seem near to the eye, while many things which are near seem far off.

O Time, thou that consumest all things! O envious age, thou destroyest all things and devourest all things with the hard teeth of the years, little by little, in slow death! Helen, when she looked in her mirror and saw the withered wrinkles which old age had made in her face, wept, and wondered to herself why ever she had twice been carried away.

O Time, thou that consumest all things! O envious age, whereby all things are consumed!

* * *

BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE

Baldassare, Count Castiglione, was born near Mantua in 1478. In 1505 he visited England as envoy to Henry VII from the Duke of Urbino. He wrote *Il Cortegiano*, a number of poems in Italian and Latin, and a volume of *Letters*. *Il Cortegiano*, his principal work, is complementary to Machiavelli's *Il Principe*. The one deals with the subject; the other with the ruler. Castiglione died in 1529.

The following extract from *The Courtier* is taken from Robert Samber's translation (1723).

OF GOVERNMENTS

SIGNOR OCTAVIAN, said he, if I understand you well, you say that continency is an imperfect virtue, because it has in it a kind of affection; and I think that that virtue (there being always in our mind a discord between appetite and reason) which fights and gives reason the victory, ought to be esteemed the more perfect, than that which conquers not, having any appetite or affection to oppose it; because that mind seems not to abstain from ill, for the sake of virtue, but refrains to do it because he will not do it.

Whom, said Signor Octavian, would you esteem to be the better general, he who by engaging in open battle, putting himself in manifest danger, obtains the victory; or he, who by virtue and knowledge so weakens his enemies, that they are not able to engage him; and by this means, without any danger to himself, gives them a total overthrow?

Certainly, replied Signor Julian, he that conquers with the greatest security, deserves most our esteem; provided that this certain victory does not proceed from the weakness of his enemies.

You judge right, said Signor Octavian, and therefore I say, that continency may be compared to a general that fights heroically, though his enemies be strong and powerful, yet obtains the victory, though with great difficulty and danger. But temperance free from all anxiety is a general, that overcomes and reigns without resistance, and having not only in the mind where she is empress assuaged, but entirely extinguished the flames of concupiscence, destroys like a good prince in a civil war, intestine seditious enemies, and gives to reason the sceptre and entire dominion.

Thus this virtue not enforcing the mind, but infusing into it by most pleasant ways, a vehement persuasion, that may incline it to honesty, makes it full of quiet and repose, equally on every side; and composed of a certain concord with itself, that adorns it with so serene a tranquillity that it never grows impatient, becomes entirely obedient to reason, and ready to direct to her all its actions, and follow her wherever she pleases to lead it, without the least resistance; like a tender lamb, which runs, stands, or goes always by the side of its dam, and moves only as she does. This virtue then is the most perfect of all and is chiefly requisite in Princes, because from it spring a great many more.

I do not know, said Signor Cæsar Gonzagua, what virtues, requisite for Princes, may arise from this temperance, if it takes away all affections, as you say, from the minds of men: a quality perhaps fit for

monks and hermits; but I cannot see why it should be requisite that a Prince magnanimous, liberal, and valiant in arms, whatever offence is committed against him, or good service done him, should not shew any anger or displeasure, or any benevolence or affection respectively, and how he can maintain his authority amongst the soldiery of people.

I did not say, replied Signor Octavian, that temperance should root entirely out of men's minds all manner of affections, nor would it be well so to do; for the affections are partly good, but that which they have in them evil and corrupt, and opposing nature, this virtue of temperance makes them obedient to the laws of reason.

To make the mind quiet, and rid it from needless and most anxious cares, it is not necessary to exterminate all affections; for this would be just the same as if a man to hinder drunkenness, should get an edict promulged to prohibit the use of wine: and because sometimes a man gets a fall in running, that therefore everybody should be forbid running.

Observe those who break horses; they do not absolutely break them from running or curvetting; but they would have them do so when their rider has a mind they should. The affections then that are modified by temperance are helps to virtue; as anger is of service to force and strength. Hatred against wickedness helps justice; and so it may be said of all other virtues, who in like manner are aided by the affections; which if they were entirely destroyed, would leave reason very faint and languid; so that it would be of as little use, and make as little progress as a skilful pilot abandoned by the winds in the profoundest calm.

Wonder not then, Signor Cæsar, if I said, that from temperance spring many other virtues; for when the mind is thus tuned into harmony by the means of reason, it afterwards easily receives true fortitude; which makes it intrepid, and secure from all danger, and as it were, above all human passions: no less than justice, is an incorrupted virgin, a friend to modesty and goodness, the queen of all other virtues, because she teaches a man to do what he ought to do, and fly what he ought to avoid, and therefore is the most perfect; because by her we perform all acts of other virtues, and he who has her, finds her not only an assistance to him, but to others also: And without which (as they say) *Jupiter* himself could not govern his dominions.

Magnanimity succeeds these virtues, and makes them all yet greater; but she alone cannot subsist; because he who has no other virtue, cannot be magnanimous.

Prudence comes after, and guides them all, which consists in a certain judgment how to chuse Good; and by this so happy a chain are also linked liberality, magnificence, desire of honour, gentleness, pleasant temper, affability, and several others, of which there is not time to discourse. But if our Courtier act after the manner as I have hinted,

he will find all these in the mind of his Prince, and will see every day produced such beautiful flowers and grateful fruits, as all the most delightful gardens in the universe cannot furnish: And he shall also perceive in himself the greatest contentment and satisfaction in the world, when he reflects that he has not given him that which vain foolish persons present him with, as perishable treasures, mortal gold and silver, fine wrought vessels, and pompous vestments, and such like badges of extrinsical glory, of which perhaps the donor has a very great scarcity, and he that receives them an exorbitant abundance; but that sublime virtue which is the greatest mankind can possess; that is, that true manner of rule and government, which alone is sufficient to make men happy, and bring once more into the world that Golden Age, which is said, when *Saturn* reigned of old, to have blest mankind.

Here Octavian paused a little, and Signor Gaspar took this opportunity to speak; And pray my Lord, says he, which do you esteem the happiest government, and the most likely to bring back again into the world, that Golden Age you just now mentioned, either the reign of such a good Prince, or the government of a commonwealth?

I must always prefer the reign of a good Prince, answered Signor Octavian, because such government is more agreeable to Nature; and if it be lawful to compare small matters with those that are infinite, more like the government of the Almighty, who being only One, governs the whole world. But not to dwell on this, you may observe, that in almost all the affairs of Life, as in war, navigation, architecture, and the like, all is committed to the care, inspection, and government of one man only.

And if we come to our body, we see every member acts and does such offices as the heart commands. Besides, it seems reasonable that man should be governed by one, as well as other creatures, to whom Nature has taught such obedience, as is most for their interest and advantage. Observe the deer, cranes, and many other fowls when they travel, they always chuse a Prince or Leader, which they follow and obey: And the bees, who with rational discourse (as it were) and so much reverence and respect observe the orders of their King, that few people in the world exceed them; which are strong arguments that the government of a Prince is more agreeable to Nature, than that of a commonwealth.

Here Signor Bembo interrupting him, but methinks, said he, since God has given us liberty as the chief gift of Heaven, it is not reasonable it should be taken from us by any man whatsoever, nor that one man should partake of it more than another; which too often happens under the government of Princes, who keep their subjects in the strictest slavery; but in a well instituted commonwealth, this liberty is ever entirely preserved. Besides, in judgment and deliberations the opinion of one man oftener happens to be false than that of a great many;

because the mind of one man is sooner ruffled and discomposed by his passions, lust, anger, or hatred, than of a multitude, who like a vast quantity of water, are less liable to corruption than a small. And as to the example of the beasts, I think, with submission, it does by no means answer your end in making use of it, for both deer and cranes do not always follow and obey one and the same, but they change and vary their leaders, sometimes giving this precedence or government to one, sometimes to another; and in this respect it seems to me rather to resemble the form of a commonwealth, than that of a kingdom, and therefore may be called a true and equal liberty, when they that sometimes command, obey again in their turns. Neither will the bees any wise help you out, for their king is not of the same species with them; for which reason to make it a parity, one should find out a creature to govern man of another species, and of a more excellent nature, if men must obey him in the same manner as brutes do their governors, who are not brutes themselves; as sheep do not obey one of their own kind, but a shepherd, which is a man, and of a more worthy species than their own. For which reasons, Sir, I humbly conceive a commonwealth is much more desirable than a monarchy.

Against what you have said, Sir, said Octavian, I'll allege only one reason, that there are but only three forms of government; the first is Monarchy, a kingly government; the second Aristocracy, that is when the government is vested in the nobility; and the third is Democracy, when the administration is in the people. Now the vices and corruptions to which all these three forms of government are subject are these: when Monarchy degenerates into Tyranny; Aristocracy into Oligarchy, that is, into the power of a few rich men; and Democracy into a certain confused and tumultuous administration of the whole people without any order at all.

Of all these corrupted governments it is most certain tyranny is by much the worst, as may be proved by an infinity of reasons; from whence it follows, that monarchy, or kingly government is the best, because it is opposite to the worst; for you know very well that the effects of contrary causes must be always contrary to each other. Now as to what you say in relation to liberty, I answer; that to live as a man will, is not true liberty; but to live according to good law, and to obey, is not less natural, useful, and necessary, than to command: And some things by nature are designed to command, as others again are to obey. It is true, there are two kinds of governing, one is imperious and violent, as is that of lords over their slaves, and the soul over the body; the other more mild and peaceful, as good Princes who govern their subjects by laws: And after this manner reason governs the appetite, and both of these are useful in their kinds; for the body seems to be formed by Nature to obey the soul, as the appetite reason. Besides there are a great many men whose actions only relate to, and

concern the body, and these differ from studious persons, as much as the body from the soul; and though they only participate of so much reason, as just to know it, yet neither possess or enjoy it. These are naturally slaves, and it is much better for such to obey than bear rule.

After what manner then, said Signor Gaspar, are those to be governed who are not naturally slaves, but are born with a free genius, and virtuously disposed? With that mild, civil, royal government I have been talking of, says Signor Octavian; and such a Prince would do well to commit to them the administration of such offices as they are capable of, that they may know how to rule and govern others of less capacity than themselves; provided still the supreme government be entirely vested in the Prince.

And because you have been pleased to say, that it is an easier matter to corrupt the mind of one than of a great many, I must tell you, it is yet much easier to find one wise and good than a great many. And we ought to esteem a King endued with those qualities, who is born of a noble race, inclined to virtue of his own nature, and by the glorious remembrance of his ancestors; and who has had a princely education. And though this King be not of a different species from his subjects, as you have observed is the case of the King of the bees; yet if he be assisted by instructions and proper education and the arts of a court, and formed so prudent and so good by those Lords who had the care of his education, he will certainly be most just, chaste, temperate, and magnanimous, full of liberality, magnificence, devotion, and clemency; in short, most glorious and dear to men and God, by whose grace he will acquire that heroic virtue, as to surpass the bounds of humanity, and be rather styled a demigod, than a mortal man. For God delights in, and is the protector of Princes; but not of those who only imitate him in shewing the greatness of their power, and make themselves adored by men, but of such Princes, who, besides their power by which they can do such mighty things, strive to resemble him in goodness and wisdom; whereby they may have a will and a knowledge to do good, and be his ministers and vicegerents, liberally distributing for the benefit of mankind, those gifts they have so largely received from him.

As therefore in the firmament, the sun, moon, and stars shew the world as in a glass, a certain similitude of God; so upon earth, a much greater resemblance and a more express image of the divinity are those good Princes who love and honour him, and shew to the people the splendour of his justice, accompanied with a shadow of the divine reason and understanding. And these good Princes participate of the virtue of God, his equity, justice, and bounty, and of his other graces, which I cannot name, which give the world a more evident proof of the wonderful Deity, than the light of the sun, the continual revolution of the heavens, or the various courses and incredible operations of the

stars and planets. It is God therefore who hath committed the people to be governed by Princes, who ought to have a diligent care of them, that they may give him a good account of them, as good stewards to their lord: And love them, and think all the good and evil that shall at any time happen to them, as their own; and above all things strive to procure their welfare and happiness.

The Prince then ought not only to be good himself, but to make others so too; like a builder's rule, which is not only true and just itself, but makes everything that it is applied to be so too. And the greatest proof that the Prince is good, is when the people are good; for the life of the Prince is a law and rule for the people, and on whose good qualities theirs depend; for it is not fit that one that is ignorant should pretend to instruct, nor he govern who is himself ungovernable, or he that falls to help up another.

If the Prince therefore would execute these offices rightly, it is necessary that he apply all his study and care to gain knowledge, and after that to form within himself, and observe inviolably in all things the law of reason, not written in paper, or metals, but impressed in his heart, that it may be to him not only familiar but intimate, and live with him as part of himself, that it may both day and night, and in all times and places, admonish him, and speak to him within his heart, extirpating thence all those turbulent passions, that raise unruly clamours in intemperate minds; which because on one side they are oppressed as with the most profound sleep of ignorance, and on the other with those troubles their thoughts and blind desires give them, are agitated with an unquiet fury; like those who are frightened in their dreams with phantoms the most strange and horrid, and adding afterwards a greater power to their wicked will, they add at the same time a greater weight of trouble; and when a Prince does what he will, there is great danger that he does what he ought not.

Bias therefore was much in the right of it when he said, that magistracy discovers what a man is; for empty vessels, though they have some crack in them, while they are empty do not discover those flaws, but when they are filled with liquors, immediately shew their defects, and on which side they are; so happens it with ill disposed and corrupted minds, which seldom discover their vices till they are filled with authority. For then they are not able to support the weighty charge of power, but abandon themselves on every side to avarice, pride, anger, insolence, and those tyrannic appetites they have within them.

Whence without reserve they persecute the good and wise, and exalt the wicked; nor can they endure in cities friendship, assemblies, or good understanding amongst citizens; foster up spies and informers, (the plague and bane of society) ruffians and murderers, to put men in fear, and make them tired and pusillanimous, and sowing perpetual discord to disunite them, and make them weaker. Hence ensue infinite

calamities, and the utter ruin and destruction of the poor people, and oftentimes cruel executions, at least a continual dread and horror to the tyrants themselves. For good princes are never feared on their own account, but for the sake of those they govern; while tyrants fear even those whom they insolently command. The greater therefore that the number of people is whom they rule over, and the more powerful they are, the greater is their terror, and the more enemies they have.

With what agonies and terrors of mind, think you, was Clearcus, tyrant of Pontus, haunted every time he went abroad, either to the theatre or other public places; who when at home (as authors tell us) used to sleep shut up in a chest? Or, Aristodemus of Argos, who of his bed had made himself a prison, or little better, having in his palace a little room, hanging in the air, and so high that he was forced to get into it by a ladder, and there slept with one of his women; whose mother, over-night, had the honour to take away the ladder, and in the morning put it in its place?

Quite the reverse to this ought the life of a good Prince to be; free and secure, and as dear to his subjects as their own; and so well regulated, as it may participate both of the active and contemplative, as may be most convenient for the benefit of his people.

And which of these two, said Signor Gaspar, do you think, my Lord, most fit for a Prince? You think, answered Signor Octavian, that I fancy myself that excellent courtier that ought to know so many things, and apply them to the good end I have spoken of. But pray reflect that these gentlemen have given him a great many qualities which are not in me; let us therefore endeavour first to find him out, for I refer myself to him both in this and everything else belonging to a Prince.

I think, said Signor Gaspar, that if you want any of the qualities they have given the Courtier, they are rather music and dancing, and others of small moment, than such as belong to the instructing of a Prince, which you have made the principal end of Courtiership. Those, replied Signor Octavian, are of no small moment which is necessary, as has been said, before the Courtier venture to teach him virtue; which I have shewn he may learn, and is as beneficial to him as ignorance is pernicious; whence spring up all vices, especially that false opinion a man has of himself; and therefore I think I have said enough, and perhaps more than I promised.

We shall think ourselves the more obliged to you, said the Duchess, if you do more than you have promised; speak then in relation to what Signor Gaspar has demanded of you; and besides tell whatsoever you would teach your Prince, if he stood in need of instructions, supposing you had thoroughly gained his favour, and that you might freely speak to him whatsoever came into your mind.

If I had the favour, said Signor Octavian smiling, of some Princes I know, I doubt I should soon lose it: Besides, in order to learn them, I should have occasion to learn myself. However, Madam, since it is your Highness's pleasure I should answer Signor Gaspar in this point, I say, that in my opinion, Princes ought to give themselves to both the active and contemplative, but rather to the contemplative, in as much as this is divided into two parts; one of which consists in knowing and judging well, and the others in commanding as he ought; and that too in things reasonable they ought to exercise their power, and what they have authority in, laying their commands on him who ought to obey, and in time and place accordingly.

And to this alluded Duke Frederick, when he said, that *He who can command is always obeyed*. And to command is always the principal office of a Prince, who for that reason ought often to see with his own eyes, and to assist himself in affairs of importance, and according to time and necessity act also himself; and all this participates of the active.

But the end of the active life must be contemplative, as peace is of war, and rest of toil; therefore it is also the duty of a good Prince so to govern his people, and with such laws and institutions, that they may live in rest and peace, without danger and indignity, and worthily enjoy the end of their actions, which ought to be repose, because there have been many Princes and republics that were always most flourishing and powerful, which as soon as they had peace fell to decay, and lost their force and brightness like unused steel; and this came to pass for no other reason but because they had no good institutions of life in peace, or the knowledge how to enjoy the sweets of quiet and repose.

And to be always in war, without seeking means to arrive at peace, is by no means lawful; however it may suit the unbounded ambition of exorbitant and ungovernable tyrants, who fondly imagine their principal end ought to be to hector and domineer over their neighbours, and on that account train up their people in a warlike and savage habit of rapine, burnings, and horrible murders; and reward them for such inhuman, diabolical barbarity, and call it virtue.

Hence, in times of old, it grew a custom amongst the Scythians, that he who had not killed one of the enemy, could not drink in their solemn festivals of the goblet, that was carried round to all the company. In other places it was a custom to erect round about a man's sepulchre, as many obelisks as he that lay there had killed of his foes. And all this, and a great deal more, was invented on purpose to make men warlike, only to bring others under subjection; which was a thing almost impossible, and an infinite undertaking, since they must in this case have subdued the whole world; a thing no ways reasonable, according to the

law of nature, which will not in others have anything to please us, that in ourselves gives us any disgust or dissatisfaction.

Princes therefore ought to make their people warlike, not for lust of empire, or an insatiable desire of dominion, but the better to defend themselves and their people from the insults of those who would enslave, or otherwise annoy them; or to exterminate tyrants, and govern mildly an oppressed people, and to give them a lasting peace and quiet. And to this end also ought to be applied the laws, and all institutes of justice, to punish the delinquent, not for hate, but because they should not continue so, and that they should not hinder the peace and quiet of those that are good. For in reality it is an enormous and shameful thing that in war, which in itself is evil, men should shew themselves sage and valiant; and in peace, which is good, so consummately ignorant and stupid as not to know how to enjoy such a blessing.

As therefore in war subjects ought to apply themselves to profitable and necessary virtues, to attain its end, which is peace; so in peace to arrive at its end, which is tranquillity; they should apply themselves to honest virtues, which are the end of the profitable. And thus will the subjects be good, and the Prince have greater occasion to reward than punish; and the government, both in relation to Prince and people be most happy; not imperious as a master over his slaves, but sweet and mild as a tender father over loving and dutiful children.

Fain would I know, said Signor Gaspar, what manner of virtues there are which are profitable and necessary in war, and what are honest in peace? All are good and profitable, said Signor Octavian, in as much as they tend to a good end; but in war, that which is most esteemed is true fortitude, which renders the mind free from passions, so that a man not only fears not dangers, but values them not; as also constancy, and that patience which suffers with a firm and undisturbed mind all the shocks and traverses of fortune.

It is also proper in war, and at all other times, to have all the virtues which tend to what is honest, as justice, continency, temperance, but much more in peace; because very often it happens that men in prosperity and leisure, when a happy fortune smiles upon them, grow unjust, intemperate, and let themselves be corrupted by pleasure; for which reason those who are in this peaceful state, stand most in need of this virtue, since too much leisure and quiet easily introduce ill habits into the minds of men.

Hence grew an old proverb, viz., that *Rest is not to be allowed to Slaves;* and it is believed that the Pyramids of Egypt were erected only to keep the people in exercise, it being very advantageous to everybody to be accustomed to endure pain and toil. There are several other virtues very profitable; but what has been already said is sufficient at this time; for could I know how to teach and instruct my Prince after such a virtuous manner as I have described, though it were no more,

I should believe I had happily acquitted myself of the principal end of a good Courtier.

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NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

Machiavelli was born at Florence in 1469. He held various high offices of state and was employed on important missions, but on the restoration of the Medici he was arrested, put to torture, and finally obliged to retire from public life. He died in 1527. He wrote a great number of works of various kinds the most famous of which is *Il Principe*. This has made him notorious, the views he there advanced being contorted so that the word "machiavellism" stands for all that is designing and utterly without scruple. As a matter of fact his thesis was that discipline in the state is essential and must be maintained at all costs. Treachery on the part of the governed naturally provokes a like quality in the governor and the ruler is justified in using any means that are necessary for the maintenance of order.

The following extract from *The Prince* is taken from an anonymous translation of 1674. It forms an interesting pendant to the portrait of the good courtier as given by Castiglione.

OF FORTUNE

I AM not ignorant that it is, and has been of old the opinion of many people, that the affairs of the world are so governed by fortune and Divine Providence that man cannot by his wisdom correct them, or apply any remedy at all; from whence they would infer that we are not to labour and sweat, but to leave everything to its own tendency and event. This opinion has obtained more in our days by the many and frequent revolutions which have been and are still seen beyond all human conjecture. And, when I think of it seriously sometimes, I am in some measure inclined to it myself; nevertheless, that our own free will may not utterly be exploded, I conceive it may be true that fortune may have the arbitrament of one-half of our actions, but that she leaves the other half, or little less, to be governed by ourselves. Fortune I do resemble to a rapid and impetuous river, which when swelled and enraged overwhelms the plains, subverts the trees and the houses, forces away the earth from one place and carries it to another; everybody fears, everybody shuns, but nobody knows how to resist it; yet though it be thus furious sometimes, it does not follow but when it is quiet and calm men may by banks and fences, and other provisions, correct it in such manner that when it swells again it may be carried off by some canal, or the violence thereof rendered less

licentious and destructive. So it is with fortune, which shows her power where there is no predisposed virtue to resist it, and turns all her force and impetuosity where she knows there are no banks, no fences to restrain her. If you consider Italy (the seat of all these revolutions), and what it was that caused them, you will find it an open field, without any bounds or ramparts to secure it; and that, had it been defended by the courage of their ancestors, as Germany and Spain and France have been, those inundations had never happened, or never made such devastation as they have done. And this I hold sufficient to have spoken in general against fortune. But restraining myself a little more to particulars, I say it is ordinary to see a prince happy one day and ruined the next, without discerning any difference in his humour or government; and this I impute to the reasons of which I have discoursed largely before; and one of them is, because that prince which relies wholly upon fortune, being subject to her variations, must of necessity be ruined. I believe, again, that prince may be happy whose manner of proceeding concerts with the times, and he unhappy who cannot accommodate to them; for in things leading to the end of their designs (which every man has in his eye, and they are riches and honour), we see men have various methods of proceeding. Some with circumspection, others with heat; some with violence, others with cunning; some with patience, and others with fury; and every one, notwithstanding the diversity of their ways, may possibly attain them. Again, we see two persons equally cautious, one of them prospers, and the other miscarries; and on the other side, two equally happy by different measures, one being deliberate, and the other as hasty; and this proceeds from nothing but the condition of the times, which suits or does not suit with the manner of their proceedings. From hence arises what I have said, that two persons by different operations do attain the same end, whilst two others steer the same course, and one of them succeeds and the other is ruined. From hence, likewise, may be deduced the vicissitudes of good; for if to one who manages with deliberation and patience, the times and conjuncture of affairs come about so favourably that his conduct be in fashion, he must needs be happy; but if the face of affairs and the times change, and he changes not with them, he is certainly ruined. Nor is there any man to be found so wise that knows how to accommodate or frame himself to all these varieties, both because he cannot deviate from that to which Nature has inclined him; as likewise because, if a man has constantly prospered in one way, it is no easy matter to persuade him to another; and he that is so cautious, being at a loss when time requires he should be vigorous, must of necessity be destroyed; whereas, if he could turn with the times, his fortune would never betray him. Pope Julius XI in all his enterprises acted with passion and vehemence, and the times and accident of affairs were so suitable to his manner of proceeding that he

prospered in whatever he undertook. Consider his expedition of Bolonia in the days of Monsieur Giovanni Bentivogli; the Venetians were against it, and the Kings of Spain and France were in treaty, and had a mind to it themselves; yet he with his promptitude and fury undertook it personally himself, and that activity of his kept both Spaniard and Venetian in suspense (the Venetians for fear, the Spaniards in hopes to recover the whole kingdom of Naples), and the King of France came over to his side; for seeing him in motion, and desirous to make him his friend, and thereby to correct the insolence of the Venetian, he thought he could not deny him his assistance without manifest injustice; so that Julius with his rashness and huffing did that which never any other Pope could have done with all his cunning and insinuation, for had he deferred his departure from Rome till all things had been put into exact order, and his whole progress concluded, as any other Pope would have done, he could never have succeeded; the King of France would have pretended a thousand excuses, and others would have suggested twice as many fears. I will pass by the rest of his enterprises, which were all alike and prospered as well, and the shortness of his life secured him against change; for had the times fallen out so that he had been forced to proceed with accurate circumspection, he would have certainly been ruined, for he could never have left those ways to which his nature inclined him. I conclude, then, that whilst the obstinacy of princes consists with the motion of fortune, it is possible they may be happy; but when once they disagree, the poor prince comes certainly to the ground. I am of opinion, likewise, that it is better to be hot and precipitate than cautious and apprehensive; for fortune is a woman, and must be hectored to keep her under; and it is visible every day she suffers herself to be managed by those who are brisk and audacious rather than by those who are cold and phlegmatic in their motions, and therefore, like a woman, she is always a friend to those who are young, because being less circumspect they attack her with more security and boldness.

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FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI

In one of his essays Macaulay tells the story of an Italian criminal who was allowed to choose between reading Guicciardini's *History* and the galleys. He readily chose the former. "But the war of Pisa was too much for him," Macaulay says in his succinct fashion. "He changed his mind and went to the oar." Macaulay adds his own opinion that Guicciardini is "certainly not the most amusing of writers." The detached standpoint from which the monumental *Storia d'Italia* was written may make for accuracy and proportion but not for liveliness. Guicciardini was born in Florence in 1483 and at the age

of twenty-three became a professor of law at Florence. After acting as papal governor for many years he withdrew from public life and busied himself in the composition of the *Storia d'Italia* to which Macaulay refers. Guicciardini died in 1540.

The following extract is taken, by permission of Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., from *Counsels and Reflections*, translated by Ninian Hill Thomson.

COUNSELS AND REFLECTIONS

THERE is nothing so fleeting as the memory of benefits received. Count more, therefore, on those who are so circumstanced that they cannot fail you than on those to whom you have done kindness. For often the latter will either forget the benefit rendered them, or think it less than in truth it was, or no more than they had a right to expect.

Ambition is not in itself an evil; nor is he to be condemned whose spirit prompts him to seek fame by worthy and honourable ways. Nay, it is by men like this that noble and lofty actions are achieved; whereas he who is not touched by the passion for fame is a frigid soul, more disposed for ease than effort. But hateful and pernicious is that ambition which makes self-aggrandisement its sole end and aim, as we find most princes do, who, with this for their goal, and to clear the path that leads to it, put aside conscience, honour, humanity, and all else that is good.

There is a proverb that ill-gotten gains are never transmitted to a third inheritor. Were this because their origin is tainted, it might seem that he who first acquired them dishonestly had still less title to enjoy them. My father once told me that St. Augustine explained the reason to be this, that no man is found so depraved as not sometimes to do a good action, and that God, who never leaves good unrewarded or wickedness unpunished, permits him, in requital for whatsoever he has done worthily, to have this enjoyment here, that hereafter, in the world to come, He may chastise him abundantly for his misdeeds; and yet, forasmuch as wealth unjustly gained must be purged, it is not permitted to pass beyond the second heir. To this I answered, that I knew not whether the saying was in itself true, since many instances to the contrary might be shown; but assuming it true, it might be explained on other grounds. For the ordinary vicissitudes in human affairs will of themselves bring poverty where riches have been, and oftener to the heir than to the founder, since the longer the time allowed, the likelier the change to come. Besides, it is the man who acquires a thing that most delights in it, and as he knew how to gain it, knows also how to

keep it, and being used to live frugally, does not waste it. But his heirs, not setting the same store on what they find ready to their hand and have had no trouble in getting, and being brought up as wealthy men, and taught none of these arts whereby cometh increase, little wonder if from ill-husbandry or lavish spending they suffer their patrimony to slip through their fingers.

How wide the difference between theory and practice, and how many there are who, with abundant knowledge, remember not or know not how to turn it to account! To such men their knowledge is useless, being like a treasure kept shut up in a chest on terms that it shall not be drawn upon.

Learning grafted on a weak intellect, if it does not injure, will certainly not improve it; super-added to natural parts, it makes men perfect and almost divine.

When you who were the beginning of my greatness or helped me in my rise, require me to govern as you please or to concede you powers in derogation of my authority, you cancel your original benefit, since you seek to deprive me, either wholly or in part, of the fruits of what you aided me to gain.

Wise economy consists not so much in knowing how to avoid expenses, for often these are not to be avoided, as in knowing how to spend to advantage and get twenty-four *quattrini* for your *grosso*.

Distrust those who talk loudly of liberty; for nearly all of them, aye all of them without exception, have their own ends to serve. And often we are shown by experience, which is our surest guide, that these fellows, when they think they can push their fortunes better under an absolute government, rush to it post-haste.

Foolhardy we may call the man who rushes blindly into dangers without discerning their true character. Him we name brave who recognizing dangers fears them no more than he should.

Attempt no innovation in the government of your city, in the hope that you will be seconded by the people. For this were a dangerous foundation to build on. Either they lack courage to stand by you, or else, as often happens, they cherish views very different from what you imagine. Witness the case of Brutus and Cassius, who, after the murder of Cæsar, so far from receiving from the people the support they had reckoned on, were constrained through fear of them to seek refuge in the Capitol.

Though human life be short, rest assured that he will find it long enough who knows to make wise use of his time and does not unprofitably waste it. For man's nature fits him for great efforts, and anyone who is diligent and resolute will get through an incredible amount of work.

I find no fault with prayer, fasting, and such other devout observances as are either prescribed by the Church or recommended by the Friars. But the best of all good observances, and in comparison wherewith all others are insignificant, is to wrong no man and do what good you can to all.

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GIUSEPPE BARETTI

Baretti was born at Turin in 1719 and came to London in 1751 to teach Italian. There he soon made the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson and the Thrales. In 1769 he stabbed a bully in self-defence and was charged with murder. Johnson, Burke, and Beauclerk testified to his character and he was acquitted. He wrote a book of travels, an Italian and English Dictionary, and many other works. He died in 1789.

The following passage is taken from his *Journey from London to Genoa, through England, Portugal, Spain, and France.*

CASTLE BUILDING

King-George-Packet, Aug. 30, 1760

LISTEN with attention to everything you hear in the short space of a day, and I am widely mistaken if you do not find that there is no man living but who wishes every day of his life for something quite impossible for him to obtain.

Every man living is thoroughly persuaded that vain wishes are no less ridiculous than absurd; and yet do but stretch your hand, and you will certainly touch a mortal who secretly wishes to be possessed of such opulence as Crœsus never had, of such power as Kulikan had been ashamed to claim, or of such beauty as Circassia could never produce.

I will not set about to inquire whether this universal proneness to wish for impossibilities is a lamentable depravation of our minds or a quality designedly given us by nature for very good purposes. Be this as it will, I will take the liberty to advise my friends never to suffer long such extravagant wanderings of their imaginations, for, besides

that the character of an ethereal bricklayer is absurd and ridiculous, a man who does not get the habit of checking his thoughts when they run wild about, will insensibly lose much of that activity which his circumstance in life may possibly require. By mere wishing nothing is gotten: but by a vigorous and unremitted use even of indifferent abilities, it is very near certain that many things may be obtained very well worth a man's wishing.

I was let into this train of thinking by overhearing one of the sailors wish just now, that he could speak the language in which I was addressing my good surgeon. This put me in mind of Sir Arthur and Sir Marmaduke, two worthy knights of my acquaintance, one of whom wished often in my hearing that he knew Latin, and the other Greek. But dear knights, said I to them, instead of repeating your wishes for these ten years past, as you have done, why did you not lay violent hands upon the Port-Royal-Grammars, or any book that might have been conducive to that end which you seem to think would have made you both so prodigiously happy?

A language is not like the heart of a maiden, of which the possession sometimes depends on us, and sometimes not. A man really desirous to know a language, be it Latin or Greek, Arabic or Ethiopic, will certainly make himself master of it, if he will but sit down, and do what I am actually doing.

And what are you actually doing?

I am studying Portuguese like a dragon, and am about it three or four hours every day. A fortnight or three weeks before I left London I did very near the same; and all along the road from Plymouth to Falmouth never did I cease in my chaise to peep into a Portuguese book; so that, if I do not understand the very pilot who shall steer us up the Tagus to Lisbon, I will think myself such a knight as Sir Arthur or Sir Marmaduke.

But, brothers, I see you laugh. What do you laugh at?

We laugh at your boast, Sir.

Tout doucement, Mesdames, as people will often say in France. To learn a language in a month I think impossible as well as you. But as to the enabling myself to understand the pilot in a month, you will recollect that I have known the Spanish tongue these five and twenty years, and that the Portuguese is but a dialect of the Spanish; nor do I think that it differs so much from it as the dialect of Venice does from the language of Tuscany. Then, I intend not to be a critic in the Lusitania and master all its niceties and prettinesses. I want no more of it than will decently help me on while I stay in Portugal: and so you see that my confidence as to the pilot, is not quite so ill-grounded as you thought.

I will not let this opportunity slip of telling you that there is an infallible way to give your little son a facility of pronouncing any lan-

guage, if you intend to make him learn more than one. Lend me your ear, and I will tell you how this may be done.

Our people of rank at Turin have got a notion, that their children must never be suffered to speak any Piedmontese but what is spoken in the metropolis; and in consequence of this notion they keep a strict watch upon the poor little things for fear they should catch the clownish accent on the opposite side of the Po.

This practice is wrong, and I wish you may never adopt it. Let the boy learn the polite speech of his town; but be not afraid to let him learn likewise that of the peasants: nay, encourage him to mimic their talk. By making him learn two speeches instead of one, you will enable him to articulate more sounds than by his learning only one. And if it is in your power I would even have you shift him from place to place while his organs of speech are yet tender and pliant, and bring him to mimic any uncouth speech of Piedmont or Montserrat. Take him likewise frequently to the play, and make him mind the different Italian dialects spoken by the Dramatis Personæ, and repeat as much of their nonsense as it is possible. Nothing will ever spoil his polite Piedmontese when he hears it constantly spoken at home; and yet numberless are the sounds that he will certainly enable himself to form, if you will but put him thus in the way.

Many Italians are to be found in Paris and in London, who in a very little time speak French and English with such a right pronunciation as to be mistaken for natives. The reason is, that Italy abounds more with different dialects than any other country of the same dimension, and that few are its inhabitants but what know more than one, either by moving from place to place, or by going to those plays in which every interlocutor speaks the dialect of his own town.

On the other hand you do not meet with a French gentleman in a hundred able to pronounce a foreign language right, not even when he has studied it a great while, and when he can speak it with purity of phraseology and grammatical correctness. No other reason can be assigned for this, but that in his infancy his Mamma was terrified when she caught him in the abominable act of uttering any sound that bordered on the *poissard* or the *badaut*, and reprimanded him with such severity as if he had committed a great crime. He was thus brought up with an untractable tongue that never will utter any sound but what is genuine Gallic.

* * *

GIACOMO LEOPARDI

Leopardi was born in 1798. He devoted himself to literature and struggled with bodily infirmity until his death in 1837. He wrote

much poetry, and also a number of dialogues and essays which are grouped under the title of *Operette Morali*. His work is all tinged with pessimism and marked by a conviction of the hollowness of life. This only serves to show up in greater contrast the buoyancy of the following essay, which is taken from Charles Edwardes' translation of *Essays and Dialogues* by permission of Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.

PANEGYRIC OF BIRDS

AMELIO, a lonely philosopher, was seated, reading, one spring morning in the shade of his country house. Being distracted by the songs of the birds in the fields, he gradually resigned himself to listening and thinking. At length he threw his books aside, and taking up a pen wrote as follows:

Birds are naturally the most joyful creatures in the world. I do not say this because of the cheerful influence they always exercise over us; I mean that they themselves are more light-hearted and joyful than any other animal. For we see other animals ordinarily stolid and grave, and many even seem melancholy. They rarely give signs of joy, and when they do, these are but slight and of brief duration. In most of their enjoyments and pleasures they do not express any gratification. The green fields, extensive and charming landscapes, noble plants, pure and sweet atmosphere, if even a cause of pleasure to them, do not excite in them any joyful demonstrations; save that on the authority of Xenophon, hares are said to skip and frolic with delight when the moon's radiance is at its brightest.

Birds, on the other hand, show extreme joy, both in motion and appearance; and it is the sight of this evident disposition for enjoyment on their part that gladdens us as we watch them. And this appearance must not be regarded as unreal and deceptive. They sing to express the happiness they feel, and the happier they are, the more vigorously do they sing. And if, as it is said, they sing louder and more sweetly when in love than at other times, it is equally certain that other pleasures besides love incite them to sing. For we may notice they warble more on a quiet and peaceful day, than when the day is dark and uncertain. And in stormy weather, or when frightened, they are silent; but the storm passed, they reappear, singing and frolicking with one another. Again, they sing in the morning when they awake; being partly incited to this by a feeling of joy for the new day, and partly by the pleasure generally felt by every animal when refreshed and restored by sleep. They also delight in gay foliage, rich valleys, pure and sparkling water, and beautiful country. . . .

It is said that birds' voices are softer and sweeter, and their songs

more refined, with us than among wild and uncivilized people. This being so, it would seem that birds are subject to the influence of the civilization with which they associate. Whether or not this be true, it is a remarkable instance of the providence of nature that they should have capacity for flight, as well as the gift of song, so that their voices might from a lofty situation reach a greater number of auditors. It is also providential that the air, which is the natural element of sound, should be inhabited by vocal and musical creatures.

Truly the singing of birds is a great solace and pleasure to us, and all other animals. This fact is not, I believe, so much due to the sweetness of the sounds, nor to their variety and harmony, as to the joyful signification of songs generally, and those of birds in particular. Birds laugh, as it were, to show their contentment and happiness. It may therefore be said that they partake in a degree of man's privilege of laughter, unpossessed by other animals. Now some people think that man may as well be termed a laughing animal, as an animal possessed of mind and reason; for laughter seems to them quite as much peculiar to man as reason. And it is certainly wonderful that man, the most wretched and miserable of all creatures, should have the faculty of laughter, which is wanting in other animals. Marvellous also is the use we make of this faculty! We see people suffering from some terrible calamity or mental distress, others who have lost all love of life, and regard every human thing as full of vanity, who are almost incapable of joy, and deprived of hope, laugh nevertheless. Indeed, the more such men realize the vanity of hope, and the misery of life, the fewer their expectations and pleasures, so much the more do they feel inclined to laugh. Now it is scarcely possible to explain or analyze the nature of laughter in general, and its connexion with the human mind. Perhaps it may aptly be termed a species of momentary folly or delirium. For men can have no reasonable and just cause for laughter, because nothing really satisfies nor truly pleases them. It would be curious to discover and trace out the history of this faculty. There is no doubt that in man's primitive and wild state, it was expressed by a peculiar gravity of countenance, as in other animals, who show it even to the extent of melancholy. For this reason I imagine that laughter not only came into the world after tears, which cannot be questioned, but that a long time passed before it appeared. During that time, neither the mother greeted her child with a smile, nor did the child smilingly recognize her, as Virgil says. And the reason why, in the present day, among civilized people, children smile as soon as they are born, is explainable by virtue of example: they see others smile, therefore they also smile.

It is probable that laughter originated in drunkenness,[1] another pe-

[1] Compare Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 2*, Act IV, sc. 3. *Falstaff:* ". . . nor a man cannot make him laugh;—but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine."

culiarity of the human race. This vice is far from being confined to civilized nations, for we know that scarcely any people can be found that do not possess an intoxicating liquor of some kind, which they indulge in to excess. And this cannot be wondered at, when we remember that men, the most unhappy of all animals, are above all pleased with anything that easily alienates their minds, such as self-forgetfulness, or a suspension of their usual life; from which interruption and temporary diminution of the sense and knowledge of their peculiar evils they receive no slight benefit. And whereas savages have ordinarily a sad and grave countenance, yet, when in a state of drunkenness, they laugh immoderately, and talk and sing incessantly contrary to their custom. But I will discuss this matter more in detail in a history of laughter which I think of composing. Having discovered its origin, I will trace its history and fortune to the present day, when it is more valued than at any previous time. It occupies among civilized nations a place, and fills an office somewhat similar to the parts formerly played by virtue, justice, honour, and the like, often indeed, frightening and deterring men from the committal of evil.

But to return to the birds. From the effect their singing produces in me, I conclude that the sight and recognition of joy in others, of which we are not envious, gratifies and rejoices us. We may therefore be grateful to Nature for having ordained that the songs of birds, which are a demonstration of joy and a species of laughter, should be in public, differing from the private nature of the singing and laughter of men, who represent the rest of the world. And it is wisely decreed that the earth and air should be enlivened by creatures that seem to applaud universal life with the joyful harmony of their sweet voices, and thus incite other living beings to joy, by their continual, though false, testimony to the happiness of things.

It is reasonable that birds should be, and show themselves, more joyful than other creatures. For, as I have said, they are naturally better adapted for joy and happiness. In the first place, apparently, they are not subject to *ennui*. They change their position momentarily, and pass from country to country, however distant, and from the lowest regions of the air to the highest, quickly and with wonderful ease. Life to them is made up of an infinite variety of sights and experiences. Their bodies are in a continuous state of activity, and they themselves are full of vital power. All other animals, their wants being satisfied, love quietude and laziness; none, except fishes and certain flying insects, keep long in motion simply for amusement. The savage, for instance, except to supply his daily wants, which demand little and brief exertion, or when unable to hunt, scarcely stirs a step. He loves idleness and tranquillity above everything, and passes nearly the whole day sitting in silence and indolence within his rude cabin, or at its opening, or in some rocky cave or place of shelter. Birds, on the contrary, very rarely

stay long in one place. They fly backwards and forwards without any necessity, simply as a pastime, and often having gone several hundred miles away from the country they usually frequent, they return thither the same evening. And even for the short time they are in one place, their bodies are never still. Ever turning here and there, they are always either flocking together, pecking, or shaking themselves, or hopping about in their extraordinarily vivacious and active manner. In short, from the time a bird bursts its shell until it dies, save intervals of sleep, it is never still for a moment. From these considerations it may reasonably be affirmed that whereas the normal state of animals, including even man, is quietude, that of birds is motion.

We find also that birds are so endowed that their natural qualities harmonize with the exterior qualities and conditions of their life; this again makes them better adapted for happiness than other animals. They have remarkably acute powers of hearing, and a faculty of vision almost inconceivably perfect. Owing to this last they can discern simultaneously a vast extent of country, and are daily charmed by spectacles the most immense and varied. From these things it may be inferred that birds ought to possess an imagination, vivid and powerful in the highest degree. Not the ardent and stormy imagination of Dante or Tasso; for this is a disastrous endowment, and the cause of endless anxieties and sufferings. But a fertile, light, and childish fancy, such as is productive of joyful thoughts, sweet unrealities, and manifold pleasures. This is the noblest gift of Nature to living creatures. And birds have this faculty in a great measure for their own delight and benefit, without experiencing any of its hurtful and painful consequences. For their prolific imagination, as with children, combines, with their bodily vigour, to render them happy and contented, instead of being injurious, and productive of misery, as with most men. Thus, birds may be said to resemble children equally in their vivacity and restlessness, and the other attributes of their nature. If the advantages of childhood were common to other ages, and its evils not exceeded later in life, man might perhaps be better able to bear patiently the burden of existence.

To me it seems that the nature of birds, considered aright, is manifestly more perfect than that of other animals. For, in the first place, birds are superior to other animals in sight and hearing, which are the principal senses of life. In the second place, birds naturally prefer motion to rest, whereas other creatures have the contrary preference. And since activity is a more living thing than repose, birds may be said to have more life than other animals. It follows therefore that birds are physically, and in the exercise of their faculties, superior to other creatures.

Now, if life be better than its contrary, the fuller and more perfect

the life, as with birds, the greater is the superiority of creatures possessing it, over less endowed animals.

We must not forget also that birds are adapted to bear great atmospheric changes. Often they rise instantaneously from the ground far up into the air, where the cold is extreme; and others in their travels fly through many different climates.

In short, just as Anacreon wished to be changed into a mirror that he might be continually regarded by the mistress of his heart, or into a robe that he might cover her, or balm to anoint her, or water to wash her, or bands that she might draw him to her bosom, or a pearl to be worn on her neck, or shoes that she might at least press him with her feet; so I should like temporarily to be transformed into a bird, in order to experience their contentment and joyfulness of life.

* * *

BENEDETTO CROCE

Croce was born in 1866. In his earlier years he wrote a good deal on literature and history, but later he turned his attention to philosophy. He has been termed "the high priest of modern idealism." He has written on æsthetics and logic, economics and ethics, and has given interpretations of the work of masters like Vico, Hegel, and Marx. His critical work is always illuminating. For two years he was Minister of Education under Giolitti.

The following essay is reprinted from *The Conduct of Life* by permission of Messrs. Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

ON TELLING THE TRUTH

FALSEHOOD enjoys the particular abhorrence of moralists, and it is in very truth more offensive than other forms of evil, much as cowardice is less tolerable than brutality, calculating selfishness than frank and passionate rapacity. The reason is that it betrays weakness of will in addition to moral poverty.

But precisely because falsehood is among the most serious of moral errors, it is well to understand and define it clearly. For if we confuse it with other kinds of actions which are not censurable in themselves, the disgust we feel for it is likely to lose something of its force (I realize that conscience is a very delicate instrument, and for its part never makes mistakes which abstract thinkers find it so difficult to avoid).

A first mistake, of a theoretical nature, would be to define falsehood as failure to tell the truth. Thus defined, exceptions and reservations begin to pour in upon us. We are compelled to admit that in many

cases the truth not only cannot but should not be told; and along this line we should eventually be driven to a conclusion, as distasteful to logic as to ethics itself, that in many cases lying is justifiable.

In case of physical struggle (for example, when we are resisting the assault of a highwayman, or the like), every one admits that there is no obligation to tell the truth. But there are also situations where no question of physical combat enters: the classic example is that of the invalid who must be deceived as to his condition lest depression reduce his vital resources. In such circumstances conscience tells us that we are not really lying, even that we are doing a duty, in not telling the truth.

On the other hand, we all know that in telling the truth under certain conditions we are committing a shocking offence against righteousness. There is the case of the malicious gossip, who can verify everything he says. Some people habitually torture us with their revelations of the "truth"; and our enemies stand ever watchful to discover not imaginary but our real shortcomings to turn these to our harm. We may even gather up the gems of truth that fall from poisoned lips and use them for our own purposes: *salus ex inimicis,* runs the Latin phrase; and not infrequently we derive involuntary profit from people whom, nevertheless, we are thereafter careful to avoid.

When, then, should we tell the truth? And when should we not tell the truth? Just where does falsehood begin and end? Perhaps it would be better to preface these questions with another which is too often disregarded: what does it mean to tell the truth, to communicate the truth, that is, to others?

If we think carefully we see that once we have thought the truth we have already told it—to ourselves, that is, by virtue of the unity of thought and speech. But as for telling it aloud, as for communicating it to others—that is a serious matter, so serious that it is almost desperate. Truth is not a bundle that can be passed along from hand to hand: it is thought itself in the actuality of thinking. How communicate that actuality to others?

In fact, we never really communicate the truth. At best, when we address other people, we send out a series of stimuli which we hope will move them into a state of mind identical with ours, so that they will think the truth that we are thinking. We do not tell the truth even, let us say, in a prepared lecture before an audience, an academy, a class of students. We do not tell the truth because the most that we can do is to send out sounds, which will in their turn provoke consequences quite beyond and apart from anything that is going on in ourselves.

This puts a different face on the matter. The problem of communicating with others, of speaking to others, is no longer a problem of telling or not telling the truth, but of acting on others with a view

to provoking certain actions in them. Among the many things required for this, truth-telling, which means truth-thinking, is one; but the overshadowing objective is that the life in people should be stimulated, changed, ennobled.

We realize this purpose by suggesting images which carry with them vitalizing potentialities; and the generic form of this kind of action might well be named after its most conspicuous manifestation; eloquence or oratory.

Oratory used to be defined by the ancient grammarians as "the art of moving the emotions"; and it has often been in bad repute with thinkers from the days of Plato down to the days of Kant, on the ground that it "did not tell the truth." But on all such occasions, the fault has lain less with oratory than with a one-sided criticism which failed to perceive the deeper meaning of eloquence and its peculiar function in life.

It is good sense and good morals for a commander about to lead his soldiers into battle not to stress the possibility (or probability, or even certainty) of defeat that may exist in his mind, along with pictures of the dead and wounded, and of the birds and beasts that will almost surely be feasting on the corpses that will strew the battle-field: but to call attention to the glory of combat and the rewards of victory—among these, let us even grant, booty and plunder. Oratory follows a path directly opposite to that of art: art proceeds from life to imagery, oratory from imagery to life. When the images produced by art are used as instruments, we pass from art to oratory and disputes arise as to educative or corruptive art. Such distinctions may indeed justifiably be drawn, though it is not justifiable to continue using the term "art" for something that has ceased to be such and is now "oratory."

What oratory attempts on solemn or formal occasions, we are attempting at almost every moment in our lives in the words we address to the people about us. Most of what we say has an oratorical purpose, tending to dispose people toward this thing, or that thing, or toward ourselves, in the manner that seems most desirable to us. And every one of us is forever substituting unreality for reality in the things he utters, softening, toning down, modifying, whenever, that is, he fears that the real may hurt or irritate, or hopes that the unreal will soothe or inspire. I need not illustrate, for examples are easy to find. Ibsen, in particular, used to amuse himself collecting them, as he did in the *Wild Duck*. A veritable thesaurus of them stands compiled in the *Praise of Folly* of Erasmus.

In view of this constant suasion that men are forever exercising on one another through suggestions that do not correspond with reality, not a few of us are brought to conclude that "life is falsehood," or less harshly that "life is illusion," or more sentimentally that "life is a dream." And we find correlative attitudes toward life. If life is

falsehood, we may curse that falsehood, and look forward to the moment when we can wash ourselves of this dirty thing called life—even by a bath in the Styx or the Acheron! On the other hand, many charitable souls smile ironically at themselves and their fellows, and bow down before the goddess Illusion, benefactress and comforter of men.

As a matter of fact, neither falsehood nor illusion but simply Life, life spontaneous and assertive, intent on finding stimuli to live on, sustenance to perfect itself and grow! For years you thought you had a faithful Achates, a virtuous Penelope, at your side; and you nestled snugly in that confidence, rejoicing that here were friendly faces to greet you, props for you to lean on in days of trouble, sources of strength, security, comfort, encouragement, in your day's work. And you did work. You lived, and you were happy. But now you suddenly discover that your friend and your wife have not been just as you thought they were, just as they made you think they were. And the discovery brings a bitter disappointment.

But what, pray, can this present anguish take from the joy you had in the past, from the things you accomplished, from the life that was promised? You were living an illusion? But the illusion is an illusion only as you feel it to be such—now, at this moment, that is. In those days it was not illusion—it was not even truth: it was a feeling you had, a feeling of self-confidence and of strength. To the deceiver you may say with a philosophical smile: "Not thee I loved, but One who once had a home and who now has a sepulchre in my heart." And that One is Life. After the dream, the awakening! Your hope is now dust, scattered on the earth! What can you do but dream a new dream, conceive another hope? And how conceive one? By a scientific investigation? What investigation could ever assure you that this or that person will be unfailingly trustworthy, that this or that situation will persist forever, that the roof above your head will never fall, that the ground on which you take your stand will never give way? No, you must do over again what you did before: accept the images that people give you of themselves in the words they speak, and go on living. You must say as we actually do say: "I must have faith!"

So now the essential difference between falsehood and suasion or oratory may be made clearer. To live we must have now truth, and now imagery, now historical fact, and now vital (that is oratorical) stimulation—and of the two needs the latter really is the more essential to us. A liar is not the man who supplies us with the stimuli we need, but the man who withholds the truth (historical truth) when we require it. The person who gives us the truth when the truth is harmful is something worse than a liar: he is a baneful enemy; for one word, one little word, of "truth" has been known to kill a man. Just so the person who gives us pleasant imagery out of time and place,

when and where it brings not help but harm, is a flatterer and a sycophant. And when, finally, are truth (historical truth) and imagery not admissible? When, instead of promoting a moral good, they are used to promote a practical good to the advantage of the one who utters them, liar or truth-teller as he may be.

Truth, historical fact, and this imagery of consolation or inspiration are, to use a trite figure, a sort of drug that may be given to cure or to kill according to circumstance. It is as wrong to withhold the drug when it will cure as to administer it when it will kill.

* * *

GIOVANNI GENTILE

Giovanni Gentile was born at Castelvetranto in 1875. His philosophical researches soon brought him into prominence and he became professor at Messina in 1906, at Pisa in 1914, and since 1917 at Rome. For a time he was Minister of Public Instruction and did much during his period of office to encourage experimental work in education. Among his most important works are *Sommario di pedagogia come scienza filosofica*, *Teoria generale dello spirito come atto puro*, and *Sistema di logica come teoria del conoscere*.

The following essay has been taken by the author's permission, from *Cavour: Scritti politici*, and specially translated for this collection by Miss Ena Makin.

CAVOUR

THE age of fetishism is past. Now, therefore, it becomes possible to arrive at a just judgment of the greatest men of our Risorgimento. Their names have come down to us surrounded by a halo of unqualified admiration, which has its counterpart, on the other hand, in the most exaggerated denials and the most uncompromising refusals to recognize their greatness. For there is never a great man who does not encounter some negative spirit incapable of doing him justice. In the case of Cavour we need only recall Brofferio, Guerrazzi, Tommaseo, and even Mazzini and Garibaldi. It was the fate of Cavour as of Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Gioberti to be for a long time the fetishes of admiring fanatics, whose unreasoning attitude was sufficient to raise in many minds at first suspicion and revulsion from these great names, and finally a weariness of both admirers and admired. Certainly the followers of Mazzini and Gioberti are not without blame for the general indifference which up to a few years ago shrouded their masters' writings—writings about which on the other hand so much vexatious clamour was being raised by those

who were least capable of extracting from among their inessential elements the living kernel of their thought. As in Mazzini and Gioberti, so in Cavour, we can now distinguish between what is alive of him and what is dead, between what is not his—but of his time and of the current ideals which he accepted—and what he put of his own into the action by which he was able to control forces and use them towards the fulfilment of his own lofty aims.

To-day he is acclaimed as the father of Italian liberalism; and certainly none before him, or at least no one about the middle of last century, so strongly as he, felt the truth of that liberalism which towards the end of the seventeenth century had matured in England. There it had taken firm root in the public institutions as a result of three movements, one of them native to the country—the constitutional revolution —one which had passed into England from Germany—the Protestant reformation—and the third derived from the Italian renaissance—the naturalistic conception of man and the universe. This form of liberalism Cavour had studied in the books of the economists, of whom he was an ardent student, but above all in the life of countries governed in accordance with principles of liberty, at Geneva, in France, and in England. He remained a stranger, on the other hand, to two lines of inquiry which had been gradually corroding the foundations of that abstract liberalism and enforcing the need of a more profound conception of liberty, although the natural tendency and, I might almost say, the realistic instinct of his spirit, so exquisitely tempered by direct observation of and meditation upon life, made it impossible for him not to notice the basic flaw in the abstract naturalistic conception of liberty. Of these two lines of inquiry the one was that of the philosophic systems which had arisen in Italy and Germany in opposition to the Anglo-French rationalism with its theories of the so-called natural rights of the individual; the other was the system which gave rise in Germany and France to the Socialist movement. It is clear from the articles which he published in the review *Il Risorgimento* on the French experiments in Socialism after the February Revolution, that Cavour was very keenly alive to the negative aspect and, one might almost say, the fundamental error of the Socialist movement. He did not, however, recognize the note of truth which Socialism throughout the whole of the nineteenth century sought to assert against the absurd individualism championed to an exaggerated degree, from a point of view which was itself inconsistent with individualism, by the Utopian idealists who aimed at the freedom of the individual as opposed to the State.

Cavour on the other hand, in spite of all his liberalism, makes no truce with the "monopolists of liberty." [1] He is an eager advocate of rights such as freedom of instruction, of conscience, and of the press;

[1] Cavour, *Scritti politici*, edited by G. Gentile, Roma, 1925, p. 306.

but when reasons of state demand some limitation of one or other of these liberties and the opposition are filling their mouths with the great principles which are being tampered with, he protests that these great principles have often brought states to destruction.[1] He refuses to mistake the letter for the spirit; and, when to be democratic would mean to undermine the strength of the state, he not only opposes a Brofferio in Parliament, but he ranges himself in opposition to the democratic position of Valerio, although it is backed even by the authority of Gioberti; and of him up to this point he has always spoken with profound veneration as "the great Gioberti." This is the Jacobin of old: that at least was the word applied to him by King Charles Albert and the others who, bound to the past, distrusted the liberal manners of the young nobleman. This is the man who, when at the end of '47 and the beginning of '48 the Piedmontese were discussing what form of constitution they should demand from the King, and when the range of opinion included men so moderate as Cesare Balbo and so violently radical as Brofferio, confessed to his intimates that his own inclination was towards the more democratic solution.[2] This is he who, immediately after the promulgation of the Statute, at the very moment for reordering, confirming, and strengthening the state upon its new bases, and when it was extremely dangerous suddenly to bring these bases into the realm of discussion and treat them as provisional, did not hesitate to uphold the more advanced critics in demanding that absolute liberty of faith should be introduced openly as soon as possible, even while recognizing that it was a matter of form more than anything else. This is the man who, as soon as the question was raised, on the occasion of the union with Lombardy, of an eventual revision of the Statute, hastened to approve of the idea and to propose an extension of constitutional freedom in a very democratic sense, in combating, that is, the nomination of senators by the King and in demanding an upper chamber which should be elective like the lower. Yet it was this man who professed himself always an advocate of the *juste milieu* and was, notwithstanding the *connubio* which so deeply grieved the men of the Right, among the founders of the party of the Moderates, and resolutely opposed universal suffrage, which is the essential corollary of the theory of democracy, considering that it could be included in the programme only of extreme factions and declaring it incompatible, not only with the actual conditions of European society—and consistent only with a "republic educated for centuries to liberty"—but with the system of constitutional monarchy.[3] In his proclamation, or, as it was then called more modestly, his circular, to the electors of the district of Vercelli (April 13, 1848), he declared formally and sol-

[1] *Discorsi parlamentari*, vol. iv, p. 347.
[2] Matter, *Cavour*, Paris, Alcan, 1922-25, I, 341.
[3] Cavour, *Scritti politici*, p. 71.

emnly that he had always desired "with firm purpose, a united and free Italy and a country in full possession of a genuine constitutional system, in which the throne should rest on the firm and broad base of popular liberties," and that he favoured constitutional monarchy as "the only government able in the present condition of European society, and of Italy in particular, to combine order with the liberty and stability necessary to the development of economic interests and with the reforms both moral and political which the just and growing demands of the people require; because monarchy is the only system of government in which the progressive movement which urges Christian civilization towards improved destinies can be kept within the limits marked by reason."

Liberty, but conjoined with order; all the just requirements of the people or all liberal aspirations, but confined within the bounds of reason. *Order* is the force which ensures the effective working of both law and state, and to ensure order it is necessary that reason should intervene and assume the control. These two notes, fundamental to the spirit of Cavour, are sounded with equal persistence from beginning to end of the writings which he published in *Il Risorgimento.*

The ardour of his feeling, of his faith, and of his instinct for the ideal breaks out vehemently from time to time, but it is quickly curbed and controlled by the power of a watchful reason, armed with knowledge and reflection, straight, sound, and clear. Cavour, who sometimes irritated his opponents in Parliament by his smile, his often sarcastic wit, and above all by his cold, rigid logic, was nevertheless a sentimentalist, ready with flaming passion to defend his dearest ideals, easily moved to believe and to let himself be borne along by his faith. No one reading these *Risorgimento* essays, and still more his letters and his early diary, can fail to discern in the sincere and often eloquent utterances of this man, whose observation of social, economic, and political facts is yet so keen, and whose swift reasoning is deduced with such mathematical exactness, a spirit full of passion and of the most fervent faith. It is in virtue of just this passion and this faith that he not seldom hazards a look into the future and sees already actualized the most cherished ideal of his soul; and from this vision it is easy for him to pass to assertions of a positiveness that is not the result of observations of fact or of strictly scientific previsions. When, for example, in January 1848, he accuses M. Guizot of a desire to propitiate Austria by his equivocal attitude towards Italy, and of wishing to "put back the clock," he closes with a warning that he will find this impossible because, he says, "the work of the rebirth of Italy is begun and it will be completed by the irrevocable decree of Providence and through the efforts of reforming princes and an awakened people."[1] The people had arisen and the princes had put their hands to reform:

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

but was that enough to justify his certainty of an inevitable *risorgimento?* Cavour premised the irrevocable decree of Providence because he derived the strongest reasons for his certainty from an undefined but deeply rooted faith.

Thus the manner in which he speaks of the progress of humanity—of which so much was being said at the time in the French literature which he knew so well—or of the results which he expects, with no shadow of doubt, from freedom of instruction, free trade, etc., shows that his mind is here starting from a postulate which partakes more of the character of passionate faith than of scientific conviction. And indeed the studies of classical political economy in which he had trained his intelligence, starting from a naturalistic and optimistic conception of the human spirit—as economically subject to natural and therefore inescapable laws—suppose a deeply rooted religious intuition which sees the world governed by providential laws superior to human arbitrament.

Without this faith, which involved also faith in a united and free Italy (according to the phrase quoted from the circular to the electors in '48), Cavour would never have conceived those happy acts of audacity which so often astonished his adversaries or his rivals, and which led him step by step from the unexpected demand for the Statute, when it had not been thought of even by Valerio or Brofferio, to the Crimean War and the War of 1859. He himself said on one occasion that they were living in a portentous epoch, and that history had always been a great improviser.[1] Philosophically the statement is unexceptionable, but in the mouth of Cavour it is more: it is a personal truth. For he who was so greatly the maker of the history of that portentous period must have felt within himself that none of his decisions was born in him as a result of well constructed reasoning, but almost as a sudden illumination or, better perhaps, an original creation rendered possible by the vigorous temper of a spirit fired by a faith no less ardent than Mazzini's. At a solemn moment (March 23, 1848) he wrote an article that rings like a trumpet-call: "The supreme hour is come for the Sardinian monarchy, the hour of firm counsels, the hour on which hang the destinies of empires, the fate of peoples. In face of the events in Lombardy and Vienna, there is no room any longer for hesitation, doubt, or delay: no course could be more fatal.

"We, men of cool intellect, accustomed to listening far more to the dictates of reason than to the impulses of the heart, after careful weighing of every word which we speak, are obliged in conscience to declare that one way only is open for the nation, for the government, and for the King: war, war immediately and without hesitation."

Dictates of reason? Yes, even in this article Cavour reasons. He tries to prove that every consideration of expediency points to war, and that the international dangers feared by the timid have no existence;

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

although the proof in the case of England does not run so sure a course. But above all the dictates of reason a bolder note makes itself heard: "In the present circumstances there is only one policy; it is the policy, not of a Louis Philippe or a Guizot, but of a Frederick, a Napoleon, or a Charles Emmanuel. It is the policy of great statesmanship, that of bold decisions." [1] Without these decisions, indeed, history would not be the great improviser that she is. Men who invariably reason do not make history.

But reason too has her hour. And in reason Cavour had one of his great sources of strength. There is, for instance, an article in which he demonstrates, against the easy illusions and delusions of those who had hoped for help from Switzerland in the first war of independence, how and why Switzerland could not abandon her neutrality. Only by one means could the Diet have been induced perhaps to change its policy and that was by the cession of the Valtellina to the Helvetian Confederacy. They are Cavour's own words, and they take the mind forward to the subsequent council of Plombières and the cession of that Savoy which Cavour wrote several articles to prove indissolubly bound to Piedmont. And what does he say on the question in '48? "Such an expedient it was not in the power of the government to use. And supposing that they had had the power to dispose of that important province, they would have indignantly refused to buy help for the price of the cession of Italian territory. The aim of the war upon which Charles Albert has entered is to unite in one family the scattered members of our nation. The sacrifice of one of them would be an act of sacrilege which would dishonour our most holy cause." [2]

Was Garibaldi right then, when he refused in '60 to accept the Plombières agreement? No, he was wrong. He was wrong, too, to think that his sentiments or his "heart's impulses" were not also shared by Cavour. The explanation is that Cavour knew when to listen to the promptings of the heart and when to obey the voice of reason: and so to initiate and to create—to improvise—history, but on the basis on which alone is possible effective and productive historical action, on the basis, that is, of reality, which the Utopian must ignore.

Cavour, like the other great makers of the Italian *Risorgimento,* was an idealist; but he was no Utopian. Therefore his political philosophy, regarded as a system, is inferior to the historical value of the man himself. But the greatness of a statesman, the reality, that is, of his political philosophy, can be measured only by his line of action. This is not so liberal as might be expected from his profession of faith in principles. And herein lies the key of the problem: how with principles so disputable, although so confidently professed, he was able to grasp and fulfil the portents of the "great improviser" which his own history undoubtedly was.

[1] *Op. cit.,* p. 107.

[2] *Op. cit.,* p. 158.

His principles are most disputable. The conception of liberty which lies at the base of his constitutional system and therefore of his policy, as he conceives it theoretically, is, we must admit, false. The liberty of which he speaks is the liberty of citizens *uti singuli*, a liberty which is axiomatic: something materialistically and dogmatically presupposed as an attribute of the individual. Yet on one occasion, in order to reject a logical consequence of the principles which he had himself embraced, the theory of universal suffrage, he declared himself "absolutely opposed to that fallacious teaching which proclaims the right to share in the government of society as a *natural right*," and regards such teaching as "a result of one of the most dangerous sophisms of modern times."[1] Only from that point of view can one talk of liberty of instruction in the absolute manner in which Cavour always spoke of it,[2] or of freedom of the press and of the other rights of the individual in that acceptation in which he, at least theoretically, understood them to be guaranteed by the Statute. And above all, only from such a narrowly individualistic point of view, could he, as he did—following an inspiration which was Protestant, that is individualistic, in its origin—consistently and with great strength of conviction, demand religious liberty, and uphold in consequence the famous separatist theory of "free Church in a free State."

Now all this conception of liberty had already in Cavour's time been superseded by the teaching which had demonstrated that the individual has no existence apart from history, apart, that is, from his function as a member of society, and that a society determined by history; he cannot have rights except as functioning on behalf of this spiritual organism of which he is a part. The State, as Gioberti also said, is neither the will of an individual nor the result of a combination of individual wills. It is an idea; it is reason; and no man is a part of it automatically but only through his consciousness of it. It is not therefore the individual who creates the State but rather the State which creates the individual. For that reason Gioberti fiercely opposed the liberty of instruction demanded in Piedmont in '50 and '51 by the Church, of which Cavour and his friends, such as Berti and Farini, were the natural allies. For these, indeed, as for the Catholics, the Church came first and the State after. For Cavour it was the individual who came first, but in the individual he included faith as being an wholly intimate and incommunicable activity within him. For Gioberti, on the other hand, the State came first and then the individual.

And the whole Roman question which so cruelly tormented the last years of Cavour's life, was founded on a logical requirement of this his conception of liberty and hence of the relation of State to Church.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

[2] Cp. my preface to *La libertà d'insegnamento* of B. Spaventa, Florence, Vallecchi, 1921.

And therein he was involved in the same contradiction which afterwards ensnared Ricasoli and all the others who followed him, up to the moment of that solution which the iron logic of circumstances gave to the question on September 20, 1870. The contradiction arose from the conception of the liberty of the Church in relation to the State, not as a liberty which the State in its fundamental and unlimited sovereignty grants and guarantees to her, but as liberty with which the Church herself is originally invested and which accordingly limits and conditions the sovereignty of the State. Between two powers, each reciprocally independent and autonomous, there can be no agreement which is not the effect of coincidence of will. Hence the desire and the hope, persistently and vainly cherished, of mutual understandings with a view to a pacific solution, side by side, however, with the clear determination to separate the State entirely from the Church and to make Rome its capital. Hence all the negotiations, underlying which the idea was only too manifest that the other power whether compelled by reason or by force, must sooner or later yield.—This is, after all, the eternal game of international law, in the course of which, amid the alternation of peace and war, the State demonstrates her power and proves her reality!—Hence in effect the Church not free and on an equality with the State, but possessing only so much liberty as the State, subject to the necessity of its own development, can allow or assign to her. Not peaceful negotiations, but strife and warfare, since this is the only way of living which its intrinsic nature allows to the State. And—need I point it out?—Cavour, ardent champion as he was of the liberty of the Church, acted in the event as if he had been convinced of the exact opposite: that the State alone is and can be free, and that it alone is the source from which springs and has ever sprung every right and therefore every definite form of liberty.

All his actions were dictated by a profound conviction—albeit unexpressed and unconscious, or at least not raised to the consciousness of an explicitly professed theory—of the supreme value of the work which he had in hand, the creation of the new Italian State. To this value everything else in his mind, whether he admitted it or not, was subordinated, so that nothing was more holy than this ideal *Patria,* which shone like a beacon in his mind. There was nothing which should not be sacrificed if need be to this sublime *Patria,* his consuming passion and his very reason for living. Monarchy, Parliament, Church, religion, all greatly worthy of respect, he honoured sincerely in his heart; but above everything else that Fatherland, not as an idea which could remain an idea, and be always equally beautiful, but as a power to be established, a new Kingdom to be born into the world, such that he might see and demonstrate the existence within it of a people that should be free and master of its own destiny, and capable of acting independently in the history of modern nations. For this Fatherland

he was prepared, like all great statesmen and makers of nations, to lose his soul; on her altar he would not have hesitated for a moment to sacrifice all his sentiments, all his interests, all his most cherished ideas, even the Statute had it been necessary, nay, even religion, if this had shown itself incompatible with the State in which the Fatherland was to be embodied. When an Italian Hegelian, in reply to Treitschke—whose study of Cavour is one of the most penetrating yet written—wrote a book to combat Cavour's formula of "a free Church in a free State," contending that that principle would lead to a state emptied of every ethical and religious content, his arguments were plausible enough, although he made the opposite mistake of upholding the converse of the formula. But in reality that formula embodied a far more substantial truth than Cavour believed himself to be expressing, for it proclaimed that liberty which alone the Church can have, not as separate from the State and existing in a sphere external to the State's action in establishing every right and every liberty, but in so far as she is herself contained therein, on an equality with all the other spiritual institutions and activities to which the State must guarantee liberty within itself. And this was the principle, not of the conception which Cavour theorized, but of the policy by which with powerful grasp he laid hold upon the destinies of the Italian people.

* * *

ARDENGO SOFFICI

Ardengo Soffici was born at Rignano sull'Arno near Florence in 1879. At the age of 20 he went to Paris where he was received in artistic and literary circles associating with Picasso, Apollinaire, Jacob, Braque, and others. The greater part of his youth he spent in painting and in writing in French. In 1907 he returned to Florence where he took a prominent part in the literary and artistic movement which was represented by the organ *La Voce*, and he became known as an art-critic, writer, and painter. During the Great War he volunteered to go to the Italian front, was twice wounded, and was decorated for his services. Since then he has lived in the country, occupying himself in painting and writing.

The following essay has been taken from *Sei Saggi di Critica d'Arte* by the author's permission and has been specially translated for this volume by Miss Ena Makin.

LETTER TO A YOUNG PAINTER

There are certain daubers who, not knowing what painting is, imitate the pictures of others and not the natural or living aspect of the

things themselves. Thus, where good painting is a shadow of the truth, their painting is a shadow of shadows, and they themselves can be described not as masters of the art, but apes of the other artists.

A. Caro, *Apologia*

YOU ask me, dear young friend, if I have seen your pictures. Yes, I have. You beg me to tell you frankly what I think of them. They reveal talent, skill, and good intentions: that you aspire towards something great and beautiful, that you are not content to prattle the usual trivialities, and that you love art; but . . . I am afraid that this *but* is going to annoy you considerably; nevertheless, should we not be frank—between ourselves? Well then—*but*—your work is valueless; it is insincere. Let me explain.

I do not mean, when I say that your work is insincere, to imply in any degree that you are an impostor trying to sell glow-worms for lanterns, or a shameless merchant filling his pockets by flattering the tastes of the bull-headed mob. No, I know too well that your good faith is unimpeachable and that money is not your aim. Only, you and all your like, whether imitators or imitated, have not yet grasped the simple truth that new times demand a new art. And it is this that destroys you. In other words you have not even understood what modern art means. You still believe, with thousands and thousands of others, and almost all the Italians, that the artist to-day is working towards the same ends and must reach them by the same means as the artist of three or four centuries ago; that no change has taken place in the human estimate of life, or of reality and its aspects; that our conception of beauty is identical or nearly so with that of the greatest among the ancients. Now, all this is wrong. Listen.

The old artists, if I may repeat a truism which I have often emphasized before, had their roots in a soil, as it were, of common beliefs, religious, political, and moral. Each of them worked, within the limits of his own particular temperament, with the one aim of approaching as nearly as possible to his ideal, which was more or less that of every one else. That is to say that since they were all agreed on certain fundamental principles, that in painting, for instance, the most beautiful body is that which most nearly approximates in colour and line to the appearance of a real body, which in its turn is the more perfect the better it answers to certain given qualities of symmetry and balance, it remained only for each artist to direct all his powers towards the reproduction of those forms and colours on canvas or parchment, wood or wall; and the closer the copy, the more beautiful was his work acclaimed to be—by everyone. The same is true of their choice of subjects. Their range might cover religion, history, mythology, or the life of courts, but their choice was determined by few criteria which might even be reduced to one.

For hundreds of years men had acknowledged and respected a kind of hierarchy which they had established among natural objects, and which no one thought of denying or even discussing. Moreover, the idea of wealth, of luxury, and of noble birth had become so closely associated with the idea of beauty that the one almost always implied the other, for the prince and the Pope no less than for the artist and the public. Here and there a rebellious or mystical spirit would dispute the idea, but this was rare and the disagreement was never more than partial. In fact, man was a trifle too well pleased with himself and his intelligence, and—let me whisper it in your ear—just a little contemptuous of nature.

But these were the good old times.

They were the good old times of energy, health, and peace of mind. The voices of great souls arose, each with its own particular quality, in a concordant hymn towards one Absolute. Art descended from generation to generation like a queen down the stairway of her palace. Dying, the master bequeathed to his pupil his skill and the example of a free individual development. Dreams were the children of life and the heart of man was content with the world. These were the good times.

To-day, however—and by that I mean throughout the last century or so—nothing of this is true. No longer, my friend, does the soul of man, and particularly the soul of the artist, know the sweetness of that ancient peace. Philosophy and science have destroyed the old convenient canons and the sacred ideas of beauty and nobility which were paramount of old. Man has questioned everything, even himself. There are no longer any religions or princes or nobles to serve; and if there is still an Absolute to whom to sing our hymns, no two people are agreed on the name to give him or the manner of worshipping him.

There has been a kind of shipwreck, you see; and just as in a shipwreck every man is concerned with saving his own property and his own skin, so in the great smash of beliefs and principles, each has tried to secure his own individuality from the danger. The artist has saved his, and, naked and alone as he was, has cast himself on nature as on an island of safety. Yes, to speak plainly, the artist has no other resource but nature, the eternal refuge of the despairing, and, having none but her, has set himself to love her with all the energy of his heart and to explore her secrets. He has submerged himself in her and has enriched himself with her every breath. It is by way of this passionate penetration that he has come step by step to understand and worship every aspect of her, everything she has to show, all her secret nooks and corners.

Thus the modern artist no longer differentiates noble and ignoble subjects. The vegetable garden and its gardener are as worthy to be observed and painted as the great lady and her gardens or the faun

and his forest. To him the filthy alley seems no less poetical than the Greek peristyle, nor the mingled crowd of the *café* or the city square less interesting than a gathering of knights or prelates or noblemen banquetting to the sound of the viol as in the marriage of Cana. Do you remember, or rather, do you know (since you are probably not a reader) what Victor Hugo said?

Marton nue est Phyllis sans voiles;
Fils, le soir n'est pas plus vermeil,
Sous son chapeau d'ombre et d'étoiles,
A Bandusse qu'à Montfermeil.

Bercy pourrait griser sept sages;
Les Auteils sont fils des Tempés;
Si l'Ida sombre a des nuages,
La guinguette a des canapés.

Rien n'est haut ni bas; les fontaines
Lavent la pourpre et le sayon;
L'aube d'Ivry, l'aube d'Athènes,
Sont faites du même rayon.

And he added:

J'ai déjà dit parfois ces choses
Et toujours je les redirai;
Car du fond de toutes les proses
Peut s'élancer le vers sacré.

And it is just this that the modern artist has understood, standing now at last face to face with nature.

I do not mean, of course, that it has not been understood by some great men in the past. Rembrandt, for instance, the mighty Rembrandt, beloved father of all us moderns, was very well aware of all this, and so was Goya, it is true; but it is none the less true that these artists and the few others of their kind were the whitest crows of their time, and that, as is plain to any reader of history, their contemporaries did not understand them and had little love for them.

For the last hundred years, on the other hand, there has been no real artist who did not accept these lines of Victor Hugo as incontrovertible. To the modern artist, however, it has not been sufficient to rid himself of such obvious prejudices as those which these lines assail. Side by side with the process by which his love for nature was becoming freer, deeper, and wider, there was taking place a change in his vision of her, and it was for this reason that he had to find the means by which he could reproduce things as he saw them. He had to adapt his style, his drawing, and his colour to the needs of that new vision.

The new drawing and the new colour! If you knew a little more

about modern art, I should not take so long to explain to you the nature of the change; but your ignorance on this point, as on many others, alas! is of such an impenetrable darkness that it would need a volume to enlighten you and perhaps that would not suffice. But as I have neither the time nor the inclination to write a volume, I shall do my best in as few words as possible.

Let us begin with drawing. This, consisting at first, as we have seen, in the graphic representation of a body or other object, and achieving an aesthetic value in proportion to the closeness with which its lines and shadows followed those of the objects represented, found itself deprived alike of its function and of the possibility of being judged by its old standards, the moment that science gave to man a machine and innumerable devices for reproducing with the most precise accuracy the outlines, surfaces, and all the aspects of a natural object.

Strange to say, the very triviality of this truth has been responsible for the fact that hitherto hardly any one of those who discuss modern art has been willing to recognize in the invention of photography one of the strongest reasons for the radical change which has taken place in our conception of drawing. Yet it is through photography that the artist has found himself suddenly freed from all purely scientific preoccupations, and has been able to devote himself to those more intimate and secret inquiries which have made of drawing an instrument for the rapid recording of the most fleeting impressions; which have made it no longer merely representative but rather evocative and suggestive, psychological and more intensely and mysteriously powerful than of old. It has become an instrument which, instead of aiming merely at the transcription of forms as the eye sees them, serves rather to reveal the inner rhythm and harmony of the creative spirit, as well as the particular transformation which reality undergoes when refracted in the mind or fancy of the individual artist; an instrument in short which is more flexible, more vivid, and, above all, more personal.

Now, must I tell you that this has not happened without a complete transformation also of the principles by which such drawing must be judged? And that to-day, instead of asking oneself if the drawing, let us say of Degas or Segantini, reproduces the exact appearance of their creatures and objects, it is indispensable first of all to examine whether it translates with evident expressiveness and vividness the particular character which those creatures and things assumed in the minds of those painters? I hope that it is not necessary; and I come now to colour, although it would suffice to repeat, with regard to this second element in painting, what I have already said of the first.

In fact, as was natural, the conception of colour has undergone the same changes as that of drawing. At the same time as the latter was shaking itself free from the bonds of calligraphic and to some extent of mechanical precision, colour was extending its own possibili-

ties of association and dissociation; and while in the past it had obeyed certain fixed canons of unity, of limitation, and of traditional blendings and mixings, it began in modern times to follow more closely the freedom and liberality of nature. I mean that just as light operates on objects with infinite variations and refractions, so the new colour adhered to the drawing—which was itself full of movement, articulated and incisive, breaking up and accentuating forms—and helped it with innumerable flashes, with countless dissolutions and dissonances, original and unlooked for effects of lightning, splashes of brightness, and delicate or violent harmonies.

That is to say that colour and line, which had long been separated, not only in the opinion of most men, but also to some extent in the actual work of the artist, came to fit into one another and to be indissolubly wedded in a vital fusion and community of function and in a convergence of expression calculated to provide an entirely new pleasure to the eye and the spirit.

So the modern artist, no longer shackled by rules, restrictions, and scholastic taboos, could give himself up freely to the intoxication of the creative force, obedient only to the teaching of nature and of the genius that was in him.

There you have in outline, as it were in a kind of charcoal sketch, the elementary, the very elementary facts, which you, my dear friend, have never known, and which you will perhaps be unwilling to admit, even now. I could tell you many other and far more important things in this connexion but you "cannot bear them now."

Let us come now to your own work which I have stigmatized as insincere.

Since, then, you have not understood what modern art is, your style, your drawing, your colour, and even your subjects, costumes, and, most extraordinary of all, your landscapes—forgive the jest—are ancient. That is to say that in 1910 you are still working with the old poetical stock-in-trade which, after having cut a fine figure in the time of the Renaissance, has been, to tell the truth, recognized as slightly inadequate to embody and clothe the new ideals. But so it is. For you, drawing consists, although you may think otherwise, in a flowing series of lines combining to represent persons and things with scientific exactness, while colour for you is a combination of tones, preferably warm ones—for, at one in this point with all weakminded and superficial people, you consider warm colours, those tending, that is, to orange, red, and gold, more beautiful than the others—harmonized in a homogeneous whole. You believe also in degrees of dignity among subjects; you like draperies, laces, and velvets. Your criteria in the choice of landscapes are almost hierarchic. I am quite sure that you consider laurel or myrtle much more dignified than traveller's joy, and a castle far more impressive than a little cottage half hidden amid the

twisted branches of apricot and fig-trees. Thus all your pictures have the same look of old stuff furbished up as new, in which the insipidity of the model struts grotesquely in the mantle of the hero, and the poverty of the invention is more insolently obvious for the richness of the tones: they look like traitorous copies of famous pictures. But if only they were copies or even imitations of beautiful work! I know copies of Marco d'Oggiono, of Ingres, and of Manet, which are like free and spirited translations of a masterpiece. One need only stop for a minute in front of your pictures, on the other hand, to see that they are nothing more than a hybrid mess of Venetian and Florentine ingredients, flavoured with sauces and lightly fried in bitumen and varnish. They are confused reminiscences of famous schools, strangely mingled with absurdities of modern "style." And it is horrible to see how the fiery colouring of Giorgione is made to clothe slovenly figures fit for an advertisement poster and how the drawing of da Vinci degenerates into such miserably uncouth forms as might suit a German illustrated paper.

Mahomet, Proserpina, and Astolfo.

You are really following in the footsteps of Franz Stück, of Boecklin, and of the Pre-Raphaelites. But of course, compared with you, Franz Stück is a great man, Boecklin a genius, and the Pre-Raphaelites gods. Yes, my dear friend, leaving out the first, who, although better than you, cannot with any propriety be mentioned in a discussion of art, the others can at least be excused for their retrogressive experiments, when we consider that their great culture made them lovers of dead worlds. Their souls, like that of Gustave Moreau, who is of their family, lived in the past, fed on it, and breathed its air. It was therefore natural that they should try to appropriate its language.

These things happen to painters as to poets. Look at Carducci, d'Annunzio, and Pascoli, when they are not great and—*Qui nous délivrera des Grecs et des Romains?*—are putting on the Greek, the Latin, or the medieval! Nor must we forget that these artists have often succeeded in rivalling their models, but always by adding something or much of their own to the memories which they were reviving.

But you! Shall I tell you what happens with you and painters like you? You walk through the churches, the palaces, and the picture-galleries. You observe diligently and fill your eyes with scenes both sacred and profane, with faces, movements, forms, and colours; and when you come out into the street, you try to apply to reality the tonalities and qualities of the things which you have seen. Over there is a cabman with his horse: hey presto! Let us turn him into a page with his pony. Here is a fashionably dressed lady, fresh and fluttering in her feathers and ribbons: let us change her into a Ludovica Tornabuoni! She has high heels and walks daintily: no matter! We shall

take off her shoes and make her advance with the stride of Botticelli's Flora! Here is a restaurant thronged with rich fools and a tavern where three merry labourers are seated round a flask of wine. Very good! We shall make the one the house of Levi and the other the inn at Emmaus!

In the country you look for classical sites planted with cypresses, and pagan groves and temples. In the city you mentally lift off the banker's top hat and replace it by a petasus. You try to unify the tones of an old square, flooded with sunlight and full of people dressed in every colour, by observing it as reflected in the dark glass of a hairdresser's shop window. The devil! Carpaccio's squares are not papered with posters, they have no such crude contrasts of colour and they have no trams! You look at the people at home and find that their faces are not sufficiently alight, that the men's ties are out of keeping with the too cold white of their shirt fronts, and that coils and hairpins are ugly on the heads of the women.

If in addition to all this you have seen an exhibition, one of those Italian exhibitions at which are gathered together all the sheepishness, stupidity, and charlatanism of the whole world, then on the image of the classical gallery you superimpose that of the *Salon Spécial;* and the obscene union brings forth monsters. And on you go!

That, my dear friend, is why you dress your mother up as an "unknown gentlewoman," so as to paint her portrait, bending, although she cannot read, over a Dante bound in morocco. So you make a good simple woman like your wife into a Thaïs, a Medusa, or a Sphinx in a smart hat. On your little sister's lips you put the renowned mysterious smile of a Mona Lisa, and you paint your father—for you do nothing but portraits, since the portrait without life, expression, or likeness is very easy—you paint your father, a government clerk, with a brigand's hat on his head, three or four cheap rings on his thumb and forefinger, a fierce expression on his face, and a falcon on his shoulder.

Nor should I be surprised if one of these days you were to show me the portrait of your coalheaver robed in scarlet, holding, like the famous Medici of Botticelli, a medal by Pisanello in his hands, and with a conventionalized and emblematic laurel-branch behind his shoulders.

> Oh, oh! Who will tell the tale
> Of the absurdities and folly of Goose the painter?

The truth is that you neither understand nor love life. You move in a fictitious world of dusty memories. Your thoughts you have on loan from this or that other. Your sensations are second hand. You admire nothing without the sanction of your superiors, and beauty you cannot find in living nature, but wish it given you in teaspoonfuls like julep or honey.

You belong, in short, like all your countrymen, to the school of the

academics. You have built yourself a prison of precepts and shut yourself up within it, and if anyone talks to you of revolt, of change, or of freedom, you call upon the most sacred name of tradition.—Tradition! Do you know what the word means? It is the development and illumination of an eternal truth, age by age down the path of history. For an artist it signifies the logical transformation of the idea of beauty; for a painter it is the progressive discovery and revelation of the visible world. Now, how shall a man discover and reveal what has been discovered and revealed already for many centuries?

Consider the path marked out by your art in Europe from Giotto to Masaccio; and from him to Michelangelo, Tintoretto, Titian, and el Greco; then from Rembrandt, Velasquez, and Goya right down to Delacroix, Courbet, Millet, Manet, and finally to Degas and Segantini. It is like a stream of sparkling water flowing through history and reflecting the colour and forms of times and countries. In that stream artists of your sort are like snails which seek to fasten themselves to straws on the bank, but, carried away by the current, are crushed by the stones and swallowed up for ever in the mud.

If the critics say otherwise and praise your work, do not listen to them. *Cave canem!* Beware of the Italian critics. They are the enemies of beauty. There are several varieties of them. There is the monocled busybody, half way between agent and fop, who has a finger in every pie, draws a salary from a big newspaper for flattering the opinions of the mob and ties in one bundle God and the Devil, the slovenly Morelli and the great Segantini. There is the commercial traveller who makes a tour of the world to collect all the artistic rubbish he can find and, returning home, sets it up in type in his workshop and prints it, distributing praise without discrimination to those who wish it and those who would rather do without it. There is the learned graduate, who utters his oracular pronouncement unafraid, that Michelangelo and Pheidias were fine sculptors and that Raphael was an excellent painter. There is the witty sergeant, lover of jests, who one fine day walks down into the square and constitutes himself a judge of the feminine nude.

Then there is the whole pack of ignorant journalists, writing their ineptitudes on art as on everything else. Of them we take little account. They are all nevertheless as stupid as they are harmful. Beware, therefore, of the Italian critics.

Above all, however, fear the aesthete who talks to you eloquently of the greatness that was. He is not foolish or dishonest like the others, but he is sterile. His speech is full of flowers but they are funeral flowers. He too worships the past and is insensitive to the teeming poetry of modernity. He is a lover of mummies. He advises the young men to write Greek tragedies; he would make his bed of an olive log; he hates the train and would have men travel in the ram-

shackle gig of Cecchino the carrier. He could therefore do you more harm—if he has not already done so—than any of the others. Beware of him.

And now let us return to where we started and so end. By placing before your eyes the scantiness of your knowledge, your contempt for the living reality, your misapprehensions, and the banality of your taste, in short your complete lack of understanding of life, I think I have made it clear to you why I began by calling your work unreal and valueless.

By putting you on your guard against your accomplices, the Italian public and the critics, I have shown you implicitly what road you should tread.

That you will have understood me I have small hope. Your eyes and ears are too much impeded by the spectacles and cottonwool of the schools, and the colours and voices of a world that is always beautiful and always new, always vibrating with ever richer harmonies, cannot enter into you unless in a clouded and confused state. It is not your fault, my friend; yet if in my words you discover some truth, ponder it.

But now that I remember, I said in the beginning that there was talent, skill, and so forth in your painting! Perhaps I was conceding too much, but it is true that here and there out of the pseudo-classical, pseudo-romantic and pseudo-pre-Raphaelite muck-heap there shoots up a tiny sapling that deserves to live, blossom, and bear fruit; here and there flashes a spark of beauty, a ray of hope. Moreover, I was thinking just then of the atrocious painting of Italians like Laurenti, Tito, Noci, Innocenti, Gioli, and others still worse: and in the country of the blind. . . .

Well, my dear boy, save yourself if you can; be grateful to me and wish me well. I have been frank.

January 1910

SPAIN

Introductory Note

TO UNDERSTAND the significance of Spain's contribution to world-literature it is necessary to appreciate the salient facts in her history. The keynote of the whole is to be found in her long struggle against the Moorish invader. This bound the nation into a unity and fostered those motives of knightly loyalty and religious zeal which have always been characteristic of Spain. These excellent qualities in time produced their own defects. The one developed into the extreme passion for chivalry mercilessly satirized by Cervantes; the other resulted in the worst excesses of the Inquisition. The strength which had been gathered during the fight with the Moors was used, when that menace was removed, in the glorious conquests of the sixteenth century and the period of proud achievement which immediately followed.

For proverbs, those "short sentences drawn from long experience," Spain stands pre-eminent. Sancho Panza had an inexhaustible store of them at command, and to this day proverbial expressions come aptly and naturally to the lips of the Spanish peasant. A further development in the literary use of the maxim is seen in Gracian's *Art of Worldly Wisdom* and we might be excused for thinking that from so much good seed a plentiful crop of essays would have resulted. As a matter of fact, the result is disappointing. The truth would seem to be that, whereas in Italy disunion hindered development in this direction, in Spain similar results were produced by an excess of unity. The necessity for presenting a solid front to the foe developed into a habit which persisted long after the necessity had passed and provided an excuse for enforcing a deadly uniformity. Its pernicious effects are visible in our own day in the expulsion of Unamuno.

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ANTONIO DE GUEVARA

ANTONIO DE GUEVARA (1490-1545) was Bishop of Mondoñedo and official chronicler to the Emperor Charles V. Among the books which he has left are *The Dial of Princes* which was written with the object of encouraging his patron to emulate the example of Marcus Aurelius, the best of princes. It was translated into English by Sir Thomas North and, becoming very popular here, possibly had a certain amount of influence at a time when English prose-style was being formed. Guevara spoilt his influence in his own country by

attempting to pass off his work as the translation of an old manuscript. The controversy which resulted diverted attention from its real merits. Another book which had a great vogue was entitled *Familiar Epistles*, often called "The Golden Letters." Yet another was a short work bearing the title of *A Dispraise of the Life of a Courtier and a Commendation of the Life of a Labouring Man*, in which the author seeks to show that all the real advantages lie with the husbandman who remains content with his modest village homestead. All Guevara's writings are characterized by a rather elaborate rhetorical style.

The following passage is from Sir Francis Bryant's translation of *A Dispraise of the Life of a Courtier* (1575). The spelling has been modernized.

COURT AND COUNTRY

THE village whereof we speak and the demesnes thereof, put we the case that it were all free and not subject to any lord, (as certain there be so privileged) that every man there lieth in his own house, whether it be by succession, or that he have bought it freely without doing any homage or service to any man. This I dare say the courtier hath not, nor is not in such free liberty in respect of such as be of the village, for as much as of very necessity, my master the courtier must win the marshal or harbegar of the lodging, and must receive at his hands the billet to come to his lodging and that late enough and weary, to his host, break open doors, beat down walls, disorder houses, burn implements, and sometimes beat the good man and defile the wife. O how happy is he that hath wherewithal to live without troubling both of himself and many sundry places, without seeking of so many lodgings, without assays of so many strange occasions of strange men, without weeping of any person, but is content with a mean estate, and is delivered of all break-brains.

Another benefit of the country is this, that the gentleman or burgess that there doth inhabit may be one of the chief or chiefest, either in bounty, honour, or authority, the which happeneth seldom in the court and in great cities and towns. For there he shall see others go before him, more trim and more brave and gorgeous than he, as well in credit as in riches, as well in the house as without the house. And Julius Cæsar said to this purpose that he had rather be the first in a village than the second in honour in Rome. For such men as have high hearts and minds and base fortune it must be to them much better to live in the village with honour, than in the court overthrown and abated, and out of favour. The difference between the tarrying or abiding in a little place and a great place is that in the little places are found much people

poor and needy, of whom men may take compassion: and in the great place many rich men whereby envy is nourished.

Another commodity in the village is that every man enjoyeth in quiet and peace such as God hath given him without to have such to come to their houses that shall constrain them to make extraordinary expenses or to have his wife seduced, or his daughters defiled. The occasions to do evil be put away by reason that he is occupied in maintaining his household, in training his daughters, in teaching his sons, and in chastening his servants. He liveth, confirmed to reason and not to his opinion: and lives hoping to die and not as he that loveth to live ever. In the village thou shalt not care for good lodging, nor for looking to thy horses and mules, nor for the lading of such things as they shall carry. Thou shalt not hear the crying of pages, the plaints of the stewards of thy house, the babbling of thy cooks, nor thou shalt not fear neither judges nor justices lest they should be too sore against thee. And that which is much better, thou shalt have no crafty knaves to beguile thee, nor women to betray thee.

Another benefit of the village is this, that he shall have time enough to all things that he will do, so that the time be well spent, time enough to study, time to visit his friends, time to go a-hunting, and leisure when he list to eat his meat: the which leisure courtiers commonly have not, for as much as they employ the most part of their time in making of shifts to play the courtier, or, to speak more plainly, to weep and lament, in such sort that one may say of them that which the Emperor Augustus said of a Roman, a great busy broker, the same day that he died. "I wonder," said he, "seeing the time failed him to chop and to change, how he could now find leisure to die."

Another commodity of the village is this: those that be dwellers there may go alone from place to place without to be noted to fall from gravity. They need no mule nor horse with a foot cloth, nor page to wait on my lord, or damosel to wait upon my lady. And that were scornful to do in the court alone. And without danger one may walk from neighbour to neighbour, and from land to land, and not thereby minish any part of his honour.

Another benefit is that men may go whither they will, clothed simply with a staff in his hand, a sword by his side, or hackbut in his neck, and if he be weary of pounced hose, let him wear slops, if he be a-cold let him take his furred gown for all is one there. A good gentleman dwelling in the village and having a good coat of cloth, an honest Spanish cloak on his back, a pair of leather shoes, goeth as well trimmed to the church as doth my lord the courtier to the court with his gown furred with martens or sables. A man of the village of what sort soever he be, is in as good case that rideth to market or to the fair to make provision for his household upon a mare or a nag, as a lord of the

court is at jousts upon a great courser trapped with gold. And (when all is said) better is the poor ploughman on a poor ass, living as he should, than the rich man well housed, pilling and doing extortion to poor honest men.

* * *

SANTA TERESA

Santa Teresa was born at Avila in 1515 and in 1533 entered a Carmelite convent. The customary observances of the order not being sufficient for her, she practised a more rigorous asceticism, and became widely known for her sanctity. She re-established the original Carmelite rule with additional observances and founded seventeen convents and fifteen monasteries. She died in 1582 and was canonized in 1622. Among her writings are *The Way of Perfection*, *The Book of Foundations*, and *The Inner Castle*.

The following extract is taken from the translation by J. A. Froude.

PRAYER

A MAN is directed to make a garden in a bad soil overrun with sour grasses. The Lord of the land roots out the weeds, sows seeds, and plants herbs and fruit-trees. The gardener must then care for them and water them, that they may thrive and blossom, and that the Lord may find pleasure in his garden and come to visit it. There are four ways in which the watering may be done. There is water which is drawn wearily by hand from the well. There is water drawn by the ox-wheel, more abundantly and with greater labour. There is water brought in from the river, which will saturate the whole ground; and last and best, there is rain from heaven. Four sorts of prayer correspond to these. The first is a weary effort with small returns; the well may run dry: the gardener then must weep. The second is internal prayer and meditation upon God; the trees will then show leaves and flower-buds. The third is love of God. The virtues then become vigorous. We converse with God face to face. The flowers open and give out fragrance. The fourth kind cannot be described in words. Then there is no more toil, and the seasons no longer change; flowers are always blowing, and fruit ripens perennially. The soul enjoys undoubting certitude; the faculties work without effort and without consciousness; the heart loves and does not know that it loves; the mind perceives, yet does not know that it perceives. If the butterfly pauses to say to itself how prettily it is flying, the shining wings fall off, and it

drops and dies. The life of the spirit is not our life, but the life of God within us.

* * *

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

CERVANTES was born in 1547. He enlisted as a soldier and was wounded in the Battle of Lepanto. Undertaking further service against the Turks in Tunis he was captured by corsairs and taken to Algiers where he remained for five years in captivity. In 1580 he was ransomed and, in default of any permanent occupation, he took up the pursuit of letters at Madrid. His writings at this time were chiefly plays, of which he produced between twenty and thirty, but he does not appear to have been sufficiently successful to be free of financial embarrassment. In 1605, however, the first part of *Don Quixote* appeared and was at once received into popular favour. The demand for a sequel arose from all sides but Cervantes wrote instead more plays, poems, and short stories. Not until 1614 when a false second part came from another hand did he set himself to complete his great work. Cervantes died in 1616.

The following passage is taken from *Don Quixote*.

SANCHO'S PROVERBS

THE history then relates that Sancho Panza did not take his afternoon sleep, but, in compliance with his promise, went immediately after his dinner to see the Duchess, who, being delighted to hear him talk, desired him to sit down by her on a stool, although Sancho, out of pure good manners, would have declined it; but the Duchess told him that he must be seated as a governor, and talk as a squire, since in both those capacities he deserved the very seat of the famous champion Cid Ruy Dias. Sancho therefore submitted, and placed himself close by the Duchess, while all her damsels and duennas drew near and stood in silent attention to hear the conversation. "Now that we are alone," said the Duchess, "where nobody can overhear us, I wish Señor Governor would satisfy me as to certain doubts that have arisen from the printed history of the great Don Quixote; one of which is that, as honest Sancho never saw Dulcinea—I mean the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso—nor delivered to her the letter of Don Quixote, which was left in the pocket-book in the Sierra Morena, I would be glad to know how he could presume to feign an answer to that letter, or assert that he found her winnowing wheat, which he must have known to be altogether false, and much to the prejudice of

the peerless Dulcinea's character, as well as inconsistent with the duty and fidelity of a trusty squire."

At these words, without making any reply, Sancho got up from his stool, and with his body bent, and the tip of his forefinger on his lips, he stepped softly round the room, lifting up the hangings: and this done, he sat himself down again and said, "Now, madam, that I am sure that nobody but the company present can hear us, I will answer, without fear, to all you ask of me: and the first thing I tell you is that I take my master Don Quixote for a downright madman; and though sometimes he will talk in a way which, to my thinking, and in the opinion of all who hear him, is so much to the purpose that Satan himself could not speak better, yet for all that, I believe him to be really and truly mad. Now this being so, as in my mind it is, nothing is more easy than to make him believe anything, though it has neither head nor tail: like that affair of the answer to the letter, and another matter of some six or eight days' standing which is not yet in print—I mean the enchantment of my mistress Donna Dulcinea; for you must know I made him believe she was enchanted, though it was no more true than that the moon is a horn lantern."

The Duchess desired him to tell her the particulars of that enchantment or jest; and Sancho recounted the whole, exactly as it had passed, very much to the entertainment of his hearers. "From what honest Sancho has told me," said the Duchess, "a certain scruple troubles me, and something whispers in my ear, saying, 'Since Don Quixote de la Mancha is such a lunatic and simpleton, surely Sancho Panza, his squire, who knows it, and yet follows and serves him, relying on his vain promises, must be more mad than his master! Now this being the case, it will surely turn to bad account, Lady Duchess, if to such a Sancho Panza thou givest an island to govern; for how should he who rules himself so ill, be able to govern others?' "

"Faith, madam," quoth Sancho, "that same scruple is an honest scruple, and need not speak in a whisper, but plain out, or as it lists; for I know it says true, and had I been wise, I should long since have left my master; but such is my lot, or such my evil-errantry. I cannot help it—follow him I must; we are both of the same town, I have eaten his bread, I love him, and he returns my love; he gave me his ass-colts: above all, I am faithful, so that nothing in the world can part us but the sexton's spade and shovel; and if your Highness does not choose to give me the government you promised, God made me without it, and perhaps it may be all the better for my conscience if I do not get it; for fool as I am, I understand the proverb, 'The pismire had wings to her sorrow'; and perhaps it may be easier for Sancho the squire to get to heaven than for Sancho the governor. They make as good bread here as in France; and by night all cats are grey; unhappy is he who has not breakfasted at three; and no stomach is a span bigger

than another, and may be filled, as they say, with straw or with hay. Of the little birds in the air, God Himself takes the care; and four yards of coarse cloth of Cuenza are warmer than as many of fine Segovia serge; and in travelling from this world to the next, the road is no wider for the prince than the peasant. The Pope's body takes up no more room than that of the sexton, though a loftier person: for in the grave we must pack close together, whether we like it or not: so good night to all. And let me tell you again that, if your Highness will not give me the island because I am a fool, I will be wise enough not to care a fig for it. I have heard say the devil lurks behind the cross; all is not gold that glitters. From the ploughtail Bamba was raised to the throne of Spain, and from his riches and revels was Roderigo cast down to be devoured by serpents—if ancient ballads tell the truth."

"And how should they lie?" said the duenna Rodriguez, who was among the attendants. "I remember one that relates to a king named Roderigo, who was shut up all alive in a tomb full of toads, snakes, and lizards; and how, after two days' imprisonment, his voice was heard from the tomb, crying in a dolorous tone, 'Now they gnaw me, now they gnaw me, in the part by which I sinned the most!' and according to this, the gentleman has much reason to say he would rather be a poor labourer than a king, to be devoured by such vermin."

The Duchess was highly amused with Sancho's proverbs and philosophy, as well as the simplicity of her duenna. "My good Sancho knows full well," said she, "that the promise of a knight is held so sacred by him, that he will perform it even at the expense of life. The Duke, my lord and husband, though he is not of the errant order, is nevertheless a knight, and therefore will infallibly keep his word as to the promised government. Let Sancho, then, be of good cheer; for in spite of the envy and malice of the world, before he is aware of it, he may find himself seated in the state chair of his island and territory, and in full possession of a government for which he would refuse one of brocade three stories high. What I charge him is, to take heed how he governs his vassals, and forget not that they are well born, and of approved loyalty." "As to the matter of governing," answered Sancho, "let me alone for that. I am naturally charitable and good to the poor, and 'None shall dare the loaf to steal from him that sifts and kneads the meal': by my beads! they shall put no false dice upon me. An old dog is not to be coaxed with a crust, and I know how to snuff my eyes and keep the cobwebs from them; for I can tell where the shoe pinches. All this I say to assure your Highness that the good shall have me hand and heart, while the bad shall find neither the one nor t'other. And, as to governing well, the main point, in my mind, is to make a good beginning; and, that being done, who knows but that by the time I have been fifteen days a governor, my fingers may get so nimble in the

office that they will tickle it off better than the drudgery I was bred to in the field!"

"You are in the right, Sancho," quoth the Duchess, "for everything wants time: men are not scholars at their birth, and bishops are made of men, not of stones. But, to return to the subject, we were just now upon concerning the transformation of the Lady Dulcinea; I have reason to think that Sancho's artifice to deceive his master, and make him believe the peasant girl to be Dulcinea enchanted, was, in fact, all a contrivance of some one of the magicians who persecute Don Quixote; for really, and in truth, I know from very good authority that the country wench who so lightly sprang upon her ass was verily Dulcinea del Toboso herself; and that my good Sancho, in thinking he had deceived his master, was himself much more deceived; and there is no more doubt of this than of any other things that we never saw. For Señor Sancho Panza must know that here also we have our enchanters, who favour us and tell us faithfully all that passes in the world; and believe me, Sancho, the jumping wench was really Dulcinea, and is as certainly charmed as the mother that bore her; and, when we least expect it, we shall see her again in her own true shape: then will Sancho discover that it was he who has been imposed upon, and not his master."

"All that might well be," quoth Sancho; "and now I begin to believe what my master told of Montesinos' cave, where he saw my lady Dulcinea del Toboso in exactly the same figure and dress as when it came into my head to enchant her, with my own will, as I fancied, though, as your ladyship says, it must have been quite otherwise. Lord bless us! How can it be supposed that my poor headpiece could, in an instant, have contrived so cunning a device, or who could think my master such a goose as to believe so unlikely a matter, upon no better voucher than myself! But, madam, your goodness will know better than to think the worse of me for all that. Lack-a-day! it cannot be expected that an ignorant lout, as I am, should be able to smell out the tricks and wiles of wicked magicians. I contrived the thing with no intention to offend my master, but only to escape his chiding; and, if it has happened otherwise, God is in heaven, and He is the judge of hearts." "That is honestly spoken," quoth the Duchess; "but, Sancho, did you not mention something of Montesinos' cave? I should be glad to know what you meant." Sancho then gave her Highness an account of that adventure, with its circumstances, and when he had done, "See now," quoth the Duchess, "if this does not confirm what I have just said! for, since the great Don Quixote affirms that he saw the very same country wench whom Sancho met coming from Toboso, she certainly must be Dulcinea, and it shows that the enchanters hereabouts are very busy and excessively officious."

"Well," quoth Sancho Panza, "if my lady be enchanted, so much the

worse for her; I do not think myself bound to quarrel with my master's enemies, for they must needs be many and very wicked ones too. Still I must say, and it cannot be denied, that she I saw was a country wench: a country wench, at least, I took her to be, and such I thought her: and, if that same lass really happened to be Dulcinea, I am not to be called to account for it, nor ought it to be laid at my door. Sancho, truly, would have enough to do if he must answer for all, and at every turn to be told that Sancho said it, Sancho did it, Sancho came back, Sancho returned; as if Sancho were anybody they pleased, and not that very Sancho Panza handed about in print all the world over, as Sampson Carrasco told me, who, at least, has been bachelorized at Salamanca; and such persons cannot lie, unless when they have a mind to do so, or when it may turn to good account; so that there is no reason to meddle nor make with me, since I have a good name, and, as I have heard my master say, a good name is better than bags of gold. Case me but in that same government, and you shall see wonders: for a good squire will make a good governor."

"Sancho speaks like an oracle," quoth the Duchess; "all that he has now said are so many sentences of Cato, or at least extracted from the very marrow of Michael Verino himself—in short, to speak on his own way, a bad cloak often covers a good drinker." "Truly, madam," answered Sancho, "I never in my life drank for any bad purpose; for thirst, perhaps, I have, as I am no hypocrite. I drink when I want it, and if it is offered to me, rather than be thought ill-mannered; for when a friend drinks one's health, who can be so hard-hearted as not to pledge him? But though I put on the shoes, they are no dirtier for me. And truly, there is no fear of that, for water is your common drink of squires-errant, who are always wandering about woods, forests, meadows, mountains, and craggy rocks, where no one merciful drop of wine is to be got, though they would give an eye for it." "In truth I believe it," said the Duchess: "but as it grows late, go, Sancho, and repose yourself, and we will talk of these matters again hereafter, and orders shall speedily be given about casing you, as you call it, in the government."

Sancho again kissed the Duchess's hand, and begged of her, as a favour, that good care might be taken of his Dapple, for he was the light of his eyes. "What mean you by Dapple?" quoth the Duchess. "I mean my ass, please your Highness," replied Sancho; "for not to give him that name, I commonly call him Dapple; and I desired this good mistress here, when I first came into the castle, to take care of him, which made her as angry as if I had called her old and ugly; yet in my mind it would be more proper and natural for duennas to take charge of asses than strut about like ladies in rooms of state. Heaven save me! what a deadly grudge a certain gentleman in our town had for these madams." "Some filthy clown, I make no question," quoth

Donna Rodriguez, "for, had he been a gentleman and known what good-breeding was, he would have placed them under the horns of the moon."

"Enough," quoth the Duchess, "let us have no more of this; peace, Donna Rodriguez; and you, Señor Panza, be quiet, and leave the care of making much of your Dapple to me; for, being a jewel of Sancho's, I will lay him upon the apple of my eye." "Let him lie in the stable, my good lady," answered Sancho, "for upon the apple of your grandeur's eye neither he nor I are worthy to lie one single moment—'slife! they should stick me like a sheep sooner than I would consent to such a thing; for though my master says that, in respect to good manners, we should rather lose the game by a card too much than too little, yet, when the business in hand is about asses and eyes, we should step warily with compass in hand." "Carry him, Sancho," quoth the Duchess, "to your government, and there you may regale him as you please, and set him free from further labour." "Think not, my lady Duchess," quoth Sancho, "that you have said much; for I have seen more asses than one go to governments, and therefore, if I should carry mine, it would be nothing new." The relish of Sancho's conversation was not lost upon the Duchess, who, after dismissing him to his repose, went to give the Duke an account of all that had passed between them.

* * *

FRANCISCO DE QUEVEDO

Quevedo (1580-1645) after an active and varied career came into disfavour with the government and suffered imprisonment. He wrote much poetry which he never intended for publication and an even greater amount of prose. He lived at a time when the fortunes of Spain were beginning to decline and corruption was rampant everywhere. He used his biting satire very effectively to expose fraud and hypocrisy, and as a result made many enemies. Among his prose-writings are *The Life of the Great Rascal*, *Visions*, and *The Hour of All Men*.

The following passage is taken from Charles Duff's edition of Quevedo's works in the Broadway Translations by permission of Messrs. George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.

THE QUALITIES OF A WIFE

The Qualities He Would Have in a Wife: described in a letter written in the year 1633 by Don Francisco de Quevedo to Doña Inés de Zuñiga y Fonseca, Countess de Oli-

vares and Duchess de Sanlúcar, Lady in Waiting to H.M. the Queen.

ALL I can covet in a wife (for my satisfaction, honour, and the good of my soul) is that she be educated in Your Ladyship's family and grown up in your service; for if she has known how to be obedient to Your Ladyship, it is to me a portion sufficient, both in the temporal and spiritual sense, that she has been your servant. But in case Your Ladyship's command should be of a greater extent, in obedience to it I will set down how I could wish that wife qualified, which God shall be pleased to bestow upon me, by means of Your Ladyship and My Lord Duke. This I do to divert, rather than to inform Your Ladyship.

As for myself I am nothing but what My Lord Duke has made me; because what I was has ruined me, and destroyed my reputation; and if at present I am anything, it is because I have ceased to be what I was, thanks be to God and to His Excellency.

I have been variously wicked and, having ceased to be so, am not yet good; for I left wickedness because I was tired with it, not because I was truly penitent. All the advantages of such reformation is that it secures me from being deluded into any manner of wantonness, because I am sufficiently warned and armed against it.

I am a man of good birth in my country, as Your Ladyship may understand; I have a house of my own in the mountains, and am the son of parents whose memory is honourable to me though mine be a grievance to them.

I will ever give such an account of my fortune and age that my fortune may afterwards be found greater than represented, and my age less.

My enemies say I am lame, whereas in truth, through a negligent mien, I appear so; and it being dubious whether I limp or bend the knee, wagers may be laid whether I am lame or not lame.

As to my person, it is neither hateful nor offensive; and as it claims no commendation, so neither does it move such as see me to cursing or laughter.

Now I have declared who and what manner of man I am, I will set down what sort of woman I would have her be whom God shall bestow on me. I confess, unless Your Ladyship had commanded, it were impudence for such a fellow to prescribe what sort of a wife he would have; when no woman would be troubled with such a husband as I am.

I desire positively she should be well born, virtuous, and discreet; for if a fool, she will not know how to preserve or make use of the other two qualifications, because, though a gentlewoman, I expect she will be affable; and that her virtue be such as becomes a married woman, not an anchorite, a nun, or a friar. Her husband and the care

of her family must be to her instead of the choir and the oratory. Yet if she must be discreet with any touches of learning, I had rather she were a fool: for it is easier to bear with a woman's ignorance than with her conceit.

I would have her neither deformed nor beautiful. These extremes are reconciled by an agreeable countenance; which is a medium that renders what is handsome lovely, and secures what in her appears airy. A deformed woman is rather a scarecrow than a companion, and a beautiful one perplexes rather than delights; but if she must be either the one or the other, I had rather have her beautiful than deformed, for it is better to be in care than to be afraid, and to have a wife to guard than one to fly from.

I would have her neither rich nor poor, but with some fortune; for neither is she to buy me, nor I her. There can be no lack of riches where there is virtue and gentility; for the man is vilely rich, who, having an estate, refuses a woman because she is poor; and he is basely poor, who, having no fortune, covets a woman because she is rich.

I had rather she was disposed to mirth than melancholy; for being tied to one another and living always together will breed us both trouble enough; and this grievance is in some measure eased by a sweet and cheerful nature; for to have a hypochondriac wife, always grunting in a corner like a mouse in a cheese, is to be tied to continual sorrow.

She must be well dressed to please me, not to gain the applause of others; and she must wear what is decent, not whatsoever the folly of other women shall invent.

She must not do as some do, but that which all ought to do.

I had rather she were miserly than prodigal; for whereas this vice is to be dreaded the other may prove profitable. It were a great happiness to find one that were liberal.

I do not concern myself whether she be clear or brown of complexion, or whether her hair be black or fair; only this I require, that if she be brown, she do not make herself white, for of necessity a man must rather be jealous of that cheat than in love with it.

Whether she be tall or short is a matter of indifference to me: for the heels of the shoes supply the defects of stature, and, like death, make all people alike.

As to her being fat or lean, it is to be observed, that if I cannot have her interlaid, I am altogether for a lean, not a fat one; I had rather she were a skeleton, or shot herring, than a greasy hostess or the picture of Bacchus.

I will neither have a child nor an old woman, which is like the cradle or the coffin; for I have long since forgotten to sing lullabies, and have

not yet learned to sing dirges. It is enough for me that she is a woman grown, and I shall be well pleased if she is young.

I could wish with all my heart she might not have hands, eyes, or mouth too beautiful; for if she have these three things in perfection, it is impossible anybody should endure her, because she will tire all the world with playing with her hands that they may be seen, and rolling her eyes that they may be observed; and it is intolerable to see a woman always gaping and laughing to show her white teeth. Anxiety destroys beauty, and negligence hides faults.

I will not have one that has neither father nor mother, that I may save commemorating the dead; nor am I anxious that she should have all her kindred living. A father and mother I would have, because I am not superstitiously afraid of a father-in-law. As for her aunts, I shall be glad if they are in purgatory, and will allow masses to be said for them again and again.

I should bless God if she were deaf and tongue-tied, which are parts that tire company and cut off visits: and above all should be proud she were ill-natured; for a fair conditioned woman is always harping upon the same string and wishing she were like other women, saying that her foolish good nature is to blame.

But the best of all were, if she would consent to allow us to live without an old duenna, or at least if she would be satisfied we should keep half a one between us; that is, a little old woman with little head-clothes and less petticoats, that the eyes might be delivered from the nauseousness of the governante, before they are quite off the spectre. Besides, it were most reasonable since the governantes are the scare-crows of the antichambers, placed there to secure the forbidden fruit of the young damsels, that they should be clothed like peasants, with a cap, a staff, buskins, and instead of a mourning veil a long mumping cloak, because they are skilled in the art of begging; and that they be called by an additional name of Mumpers, as the emperors are styled Cæsars.

That I may end seriously and with truth, as I began, I must tell Your Ladyship I shall highly prize a wife, if she be such as I wish her; and do know how to bear with her if she be such as I deserve; for I may be unhappily married but I cannot be an ill husband. God grant Your Ladyship a long and happy life, and prolong the days of My Lord Duke, giving you that issue that is requisite to your family and great estate.

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BALTHASAR GRACIAN

We know little of Gracian (1601-1658) but it is noteworthy that he was one of the first to be educated according to the Jesuit system.

He afterward became an active member of the order and showed in his practice the prudence which he advocated in his teaching. His book, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, represents an interesting development of the maxim very much on the same lines as that which we see in *Ecclesiastes*. The style is worth noting. As one critic has aptly put it, "The embroidery is rich, but the jacket is short."

The following extracts from *The Art of Worldly Wisdom* are taken from Mr. Joseph Jacobs' edition in the Golden Treasury Series by permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM

Act Sometimes on Second Thoughts, Sometimes on First Impulse

MAN'S life is a warfare against the malice of men. Sagacity fights with strategic changes of intention: it never does what it threatens, it aims only at escaping notice. It aims in the air with dexterity and strikes home in an unexpected direction, always seeking to conceal its game. It lets a purpose appear in order to attract the opponent's attention, but then turns round and conquers by the unexpected. But a penetrating intelligence anticipates this by watchfulness and lurks in ambush. It always understands the opposite of what the opponent wishes it to understand, and recognizes every feint of guile. It lets the first impulse pass by and waits for the second, or even the third. Sagacity now rises to higher flights on seeing its artifice foreseen, and tries to deceive by truth itself, changes its game in order to change its deceit, and cheats by not cheating, and founds deception on the greatest candour. But the opposing intelligence is on guard with increased watchfulness, and discovers the darkness concealed by the light and deciphers every move, the more subtle because more simple. In this way the guile of the Python combats the far darting rays of Apollo.

The Thing Itself and the Way It Is Done

"Substance" is not enough: "accident" is also required, as the scholastics say. A bad manner spoils everything, even reason and justice; a good one supplies everything, gilds a No, sweetens truth, and adds a touch of beauty to old age itself. The *how* plays a large part in affairs, a good manner steals into the affections. Fine behaviour is a joy in life, and a pleasant expression helps out of a difficulty in a remarkable way.

Avoid Worry

Such prudence brings its own reward. It escapes much, and is thus the midwife of comfort and so of happiness. Neither give nor take

bad news unless it can help. Some men's ears are stuffed with the sweets of flattery; others with the bitters of scandal, while some cannot live without a daily annoyance no more than Mithridates could without poison. It is no rule of life to prepare for yourself lifelong trouble in order to give a temporary enjoyment to another, however near and dear. You never ought to spoil your own chances to please another who advises and keeps out of the affair, and in all cases where to oblige another involves disobliging yourself, 'tis a standing rule that it is better he should suffer now than you afterwards and in vain.

Elevated Taste

You can train it like the intellect. Full knowledge whets desire and increases enjoyment. You may know a noble spirit by the elevation of his taste: it must be a great thing that can satisfy a great mind. Big bites for big mouths, lofty things for lofty spirits. Before their judgment the bravest tremble, the most perfect lose confidence. Things of the first importance are few; let appreciation be rare. Taste can be imparted by intercourse: great good luck to associate with the highest taste. But do not affect to be dissatisfied with everything: 'tis the extreme of folly, and more odious if from affectation than if from Quixotry. Some would have God create another world and other ideals to satisfy their fantastic imagination.

Don't Be a Bore

The man of one business or of one topic is apt to be heavy. Brevity flatters and does better business; it gains by courtesy what it loses by curtness. Good things, when short, are twice as good. The quintessence of the matter is more effective than a whole farrago of details. It is a well-known truth that talkative folk rarely have much sense whether in dealing with the matter itself or its formal treatment. There are that serve more for stumbling-stones than centrepieces, useless lumber in every one's way. The wise avoid being bores, especially to the great, who are fully occupied: it is worse to disturb one of them than all the rest. Well said is soon said.

The Art of Letting Things Alone

The more so the wilder the waves of public or of private life. There are hurricanes in human affairs, tempests of passion, when it is wise to retire to a harbour and ride at anchor. Remedies often make diseases worse: in such cases one has to leave them to their natural course and the moral suasion of time. It takes a wise doctor to know when not to prescribe, and at times the greater skill consists in not applying remedies. The proper way to still the storms of the vulgar

is to hold your hand and let them calm down of themselves. To give way now is to conquer by and by. A fountain gets muddy with but little stirring up, and does not get clear by our meddling with it but by our leaving it alone. The best remedy for disturbances is to let them run their course, for so they quiet down.

Recognize Unlucky Days

They exist: nothing goes well on them; even though the game may be changed the ill-luck remains. Two tries should be enough to tell if one is in luck to-day or not. Everything is in process of change, even the mind, and no one is always wise: chance has something to say, even how to write a good letter. All perfection turns on the time; even beauty has its hours. Even wisdom fails at times by doing too much or too little. To turn out well a thing must be done on its own day. This is why with some everything turns out ill, with others all goes well, even with less trouble. They find everything ready, their wit prompt, their presiding genius favourable, their lucky star in the ascendant. At such times one must seize the occasion and not throw away the slightest chance. But a shrewd person will not decide on the day's luck by a single piece of good or bad fortune, for the one may be only a lucky chance and the other only a slight annoyance.

In One Word, Be a Saint

So is all said at once. Virtue is the link of all perfections, the centre of all the felicities. She it is that makes a man prudent, discreet, sagacious, cautious, wise, courageous, thoughtful, trustworthy, happy, honoured, truthful, and a universal Hero. Three HHH's make a man happy—Health, Holiness, and a Headpiece.

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MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

Miguel de Unamuno was born at Bilbao in 1864. After a period spent in studying at Madrid he took up his abode at Salamanca where he lectured on Greek literature and the Castilian language. In 1900 he was appointed Rector of the University. Certain newspaper articles of his denouncing abuses in the state brought him into disfavour with the government and he was deprived of his rectorship. This was followed by a sentence of imprisonment which, however, was never carried out. General Primo de Rivera's *coup d'état* in 1923 drew forth strong protestations from Unamuno and in consequence the Dictator banished him to Fuerteventura, one of the Canary Islands. This aroused such a storm of condemnation that a decree of amnesty was

published later in the same year (1924) and Unamuno was liberated. He then settled in Paris. His works include novels and short stories, a book of travels, verse, and several volumes of collected essays.

The following essay is reprinted from *Essays and Soliloquies* by Miguel de Unamuno by and with permission of and special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers. The translation is by J. E. Crawford Flitch.

SOLITUDE

IT IS my love for the multitude that makes me fly from them. In flying from them, I go on seeking them. Do not call me a misanthrope. Misanthropes seek society and intercourse with people; they need them in order to feed their hatred and disdain of them. Love can live upon memories and hopes; hate needs present realities.

Let me, then, fly from society and take refuge in the quiet of the country, seeking in the heart of it and within my own soul the company of people.

Men only feel themselves really brothers when they hear one another in the silence of things in the midst of solitude. The hushed moan of your neighbour which reaches you through the wall that separates you penetrates much more deeply into your heart than would all his laments if he told you them to your face. I shall never forget a night that I once spent at a watering-place, during the whole of which I was kept awake by a very faint intermittent moaning—a moaning that seemed to wish to stifle itself in order not to awaken those who were asleep, a discreet and gentle moaning that came to me from the neighbouring bedroom. That moaning, which came from I know not whom, had lost all personality; it produced upon me the illusion of coming out of the silence of the night itself, as if it were the silence or the night that lamented, and there was even a moment when I dreamt that that gentle lament rose to the surface from the depths of my own soul.

I left the following day without having sought to ascertain who was the sufferer or why he suffered. And I believe that I have never felt so much pity for any other man.

It is only solitude that dissolves that thick cloak of shame that isolates us from one another; only in solitude do we find ourselves; and in finding ourselves, we find in ourselves all our brothers in solitude. Solitude unites us, believe me, just as much as society separates us. And if we do not know how to love one another, it is because we do not know how to be alone.

It is only in solitude, when it has broken the thick crust of shame that separates us from one another and separates us all from God,

that we have no secrets from God; only in solitude do we raise our heart to the Heart of the Universe; only in solitude does the redeeming hymn of supreme confession issue from our soul.

There is no other real dialogue than the dialogue that you hold with yourself, and you can hold this dialogue only when you are alone. In solitude and only in solitude can you know yourself as a neighbour; and so long as you do not know yourself as a neighbour, you can never hope to see in your neighbours other I's. If you want to learn to love others, withdraw into yourself.

I am accused of not caring about or being interested in the anxieties of men. It is just the contrary. I am convinced that there is no more than one anxiety, one and the same for all men, and never do I feel it or understand it more deeply than when I am alone. Each day I believe less and less in the social question, and in the political question, and in the æsthetic question, and in the moral question, and in the religious question, and in all the other questions that people have invented in order that they shall not have to face resolutely the only real question that exists—the human question, which is mine, yours, his, everyone's.

And as I know that you will say that I am playing with words and that you will ask me what I mean by this human question, I shall have to repeat it once again: The human question is the question of knowing what is to become of my consciousness, of yours, of his, of everyone's, after each one of us has died. So long as we are not facing this question, all that we are doing is simply making a noise so that we shall not hear it. And that is why we fear solitude so much and seek the company of one another.

The greatest thing that there is among men is a poet, a lyric poet, that is to say a real poet. A poet is a man who keeps no secrets from God in his heart, and who, in singing his griefs, his fears, his hopes, and his memories, purifies and purges them from all falsehood. His songs are your songs, are my songs.

Have you ever heard any deeper, any more intimate, any more enduring poetry than that of the Psalms? And the Psalms are meant for singing alone. I know that they are sung by crowds, assembled together under the same roof in religious services; but in singing them the crowd ceases to be a crowd. In singing the Psalms, each one withdraws into himself and the voices of others echo in his ears simply as the consonance and reinforcement of his own voice.

And I observe this difference between a crowd assembled together to sing the Psalms and a crowd assembled to see a drama or to hear an orator: it is that the former is a real society, a company of living souls, in which each one exists and subsists by himself, while the

other is a formless mass and each one of those who compose it no more than a fragment of the human herd.

I have never felt any desire to move a crowd, to exercise influence upon a mass of people—who lose their personality in being massed together—and on the other hand I have always felt a furious desire to perturb the heart of each individual man, to exercise an influence upon each one of my brothers in humanity. Whenever I have spoken in public I have almost always succeeded in employing a kind of lyrical oratory, and I have endeavoured to force upon myself the illusion that I was speaking to only one of my hearers, to any one, no matter which, to each one, not to all of them *en masse*.

We men are impenetrable. Spirits, like solid bodies, can only communicate with one another by the contact of surfaces, not by penetrating one another, still less by fusing together.

You have heard me say a thousand times that most spirits seem to me like crustaceans, with the bone outside and the flesh inside. And when in some books that I have forgotten I read what a painful and terrible thing it would be if the human spirit were to be incarnated in a crab and had to make use of the crab's senses, organs, and members, I said to myself: "This is what actually happens; we are all unfortunate crabs, shut up in hard shells."

And the poet is he whose flesh emerges from the shell, whose soul oozes forth. And when, in our hours of anguish or joy, our soul oozes forth, we are all of us poets.

And that is why I believe that it is necessary to agitate the masses, to shake men and winnow them as in a sieve, to throw against one another, in order to see if in this way their shells will not break and their spirits flow forth, whether they will not mingle and unite with one another, and whether the real collective spirit, the soul of humanity, may not thus be welded together.

But the sad thing is, if we are to go by past experience, that all these mutual rubbings and clashings, far from breaking the shells, harden, thicken, and enlarge them. They are like corns that grow larger and stronger with rubbing. Although perhaps it is that the clashes are not violent enough. And in any case it must be clashing, not rubbing. I do not like to rub against people but to clash against them; I do not like to approach people obliquely and glance off them at a tangent, but to meet them frontally, and if possible split them in two. It is the best service I can do them. And there is no better preparation for this task than solitude.

It is very sad that we have to communicate with one another by touching, at most by rubbing, through the medium of the hard shells that isolate us from one another. And I am convinced that this hard shell becomes weaker and more delicate, in solitude, until it changes

into the most tenuous membrane which permits of the action of osmosis and exosmosis. And that is why I believe that it is solitude that makes men really sociable and human.

There are two kinds of union: one by removing differences, separating the elements that differentiate from those that unite, the other by fusion, bringing these differences into agreement. If we take away from the mind of each man that which is his own, that way of looking at things that is peculiar to him, everything that he takes care to hide for fear people should think him mad, we are left with that which he has in common with everyone else, and this common element gives us that wretched thing that is called common sense and which is nothing more than the abstract of the practical intelligence. But if we fuse into one the differing judgments of people, with all that they jealously preserve, and bring their caprices, their oddities, their singularities into agreement, we shall have human sense, which, in those who are rich in it, is not common but private sense.

The best that occurs to men is that which occurs to them when they are alone, that which they dare not confess, not only not to their neighbour but very often not even to themselves, that which they fly from, that which they imprison within themselves while it is in a state of pure thought and before it can flower into words. And the solitary is usually daring enough to express this, to allow it to flower, and so it comes about that he speaks that which others think in solitude by themselves and which nobody dares to publish. The solitary thinks everything aloud, and surprises others by saying that which they think beneath their breath, while they seek to deceive one another by pretending to make them believe that they are thinking something else, but without anybody believing them.

All this will help you to deduce for yourself in what way and to what extent solitude is the great school of sociability, and how right it is that we should sometimes withdraw ourselves from men in order that we may the better serve them.

* * *

JOSÉ ORTEGA Y GASSET

ORTEGA Y GASSET was born at Madrid in 1883. He was educated at the College of the Jesuit Fathers at Miraflores del Valo (Malaga), and afterward studied philosophy for several years in Germany. On returning to Spain he was elected to the chair of metaphysics in the Central University. His many published works include serious studies in philosophy and literature as well as the famous *Meditaciones del Quijote* from which the following essay is taken.

This extract is reprinted by the author's permission and has been specially translated for the present volume by Mr. J. W. Jeaffreson.

MEDITATIONS

THE Monastery of the Escorial stands upon a hill the southward slope of which dips down beneath covering woodland of mingled oak and ash. The spot is known as the "Forge." With the changing seasons the livid, exemplary pile of the building varies in character thanks to the thick carpet spread at its feet, copper-colour in winter, in autumn golden and in summer darkest green. Here the passing of spring is torrent-like, instantaneous, and excessive—like the fleeting of a lascivious vision through the steely soul of some arch-coenobite. Swiftly the trees are clothed with the bright opulence of young, fresh leaves; the earth is lost to sight under emerald grass, itself garbed in turn, first with yellow daisies, then with the deep mauve of lavender. Here are haunts of excellent quietude—which is never silence absolute. When about us all is utter stillness, the void of sound must needs be filled with something, and at such times we give ear to the drumming of our own hearts, the blood coursing through our temples, and the rush of the air as it pours into our lungs to escape again with toil. All which sounds are disquieting by reason of their too concrete import. Every heart-beat seems as though it would be the last. The next saving throb, when it comes, appears fortuitous, affording no pledge of a successor. Preferable therefore is silence audible with purely decorative sounds of non-concrete implication. And so it is in this place. Here are bright running waters babbling past, and here among the green the warbling of small birds—greenfinches, linnets, orioles—and from time to time the sublime chant of a nightingale.

On one such evening in the fugitive spring these are the musings that came to meet me at the "Forge."

The Wood

How many trees go to make up a forest? How many houses make a city? The peasant of Poitiers once sang,

La hauteur des maisons
empêche de voir la ville,

and the Germanic proverb has it that the wood cannot be seen for the trees. Both a forest and a city are things essentially profound, and, of sheer necessity, this depth of theirs, if it would become manifest, is constrained to convert itself into surface.

I have around me now a score or so of solemn oaks and gracious ash-trees. Are they a wood? Assuredly they are not. They are the trees I see *of* a wood. The veritable wood is constituted by the trees

I do not see. A wood is an invisible entity, and for this reason, in every language, a halo of mystery clings about the very name.

Anon I may arise and follow one of yon wayward footpaths across which I see the blackbirds flitting. The trees I saw one moment past will be replaced by others similar, and thus the wood will be continuously decomposed and broken into a series of fragments, each visible successively. But the wood will at no time be in the place at which I am. It flees from our eyes.

As we reach one of those brief openings in the verdure, we fancy that just now a man was seated there with elbows upon knees and hands pressed to temples and that, as we were on the point of coming up to him, he rose and went his way. We are fain to believe that, having gone but a few steps, he must have resumed the selfsame attitude elsewhere, at no great distance from us. If we yield to the desire of overtaking him, drawn by that overmastering attraction the heart of a wood exerts on whomsoever enters it, the like scene will recur indefinitely.

The wood is ever a little way beyond the spot we have reached. It has just receded from where we are, leaving its cool footprint behind it. The ancients who exteriorized the phantasms of their emotions as living, corporeal forms, peopled the woodland with elusive nymphs. Nothing could be truer or more expressive. As you move forward cast a swift glance toward the break in the dense leafage ahead of you and you will mark a quivering of the air as if it were about to fill in the void left by some light, naked shape.

Starting from any given point within it, the wood is, strictly speaking, a mere potentiality. It is the path we might follow; the fountain head whose faint whisper is borne to us upon the arms of silence and to which a few steps might bring us; antiphons from the far-off psalming of the birds perched on boughs under which we might come. The wood is a summation of possible acts of ours, which, being realized, would lose their genuine value. Such portion of the wood as stands in immediate manner before us is solely a pretext for the remainder lying hidden and remote.

Depth and Surface

Maybe the phrase "the wood is not to be seen for the trees" is not taken in its strictly literal meaning; maybe the jest essayed in it turns its sting against the speaker.

The trees do not allow the wood to be seen, and, indeed, thanks to the fact that it is so, the wood exists. It is the mission of the patently visible trees to make the remainder latent, and not until we are perfectly aware that behind the visible landscape lurk other invisible landscapes, have we the feeling that we are in a wood.

Invisibility, or hiddenness, is not a merely negative character but a positive quality, which, being shed about an object, transfigures it, making of it something new. In this sense it is absurd—as the aforesaid proverb asserts—to claim to see the wood. The wood is a wood only in so far as it is latent.

Herein lies an excellent lesson for such as are blind to the multiplicity of destinies, equally indispensable and equally worthy of respect, that this world enfolds. There exist things which, if made manifest, either succumb or are shorn of their value, but which, on the other hand, in being hidden or passed over, attain their plenitude. Such a one, filling a secondary station, might achieve complete self-expansion; in the panting struggle for a place in the forefront he annihilates his whole virtue. A contemporary novel tells of a boy of modest brains but exquisite moral sensibility who finds solace for being invariably at the bottom of his class at school in the thought that "when all is said and done somebody has got to be last!" A shrewd reflection, that, and one that may well afford us guidance. There can be as much nobility in being last as in being first, for ultimacy and primacy are magistratures equally requisite to the world, each for the other's sake.

Some men refuse to admit depth in a thing, for they insist that what is deep should be manifest even as is the superficial. In so much as they deny the existence of divers species of clarity, they cling exclusively to the clarity peculiar to surfaces. They fail to observe that it is essential to depth to be hidden behind a surface, through which, pulsing beneath, it can alone appear.

Failure to recognize that each thing has its own condition and not that which we are pleased to require of it, is, to my mind, the truly capital sin, or, as I would term it, cordial sin, seeing that it has its source in lack of heart. Nothing can be more illicit than the belittling of the world through our whims and petty blindnesses, the diminishing of reality, the suppressing imaginarily of portions of that which is.

That is what happens when we require of depth that it should present itself in the same manner as the superficial. No; there are things that present of themselves only such part as is rigorously necessary for us to perceive that they lie hidden behind.

In order to see that this is so we need have resort to nothing very abstract. All things deep are of analogous condition. The material objects, for instance, that we see and touch, possess a third dimension constituting their depth or inwardness. Nevertheless this third dimension we neither see nor touch. We encounter, that is certain, upon their surfaces allusions to something that lies hidden within them; but this "within" can never be brought "without" and become patent under the same form as the *facies* of the object. Vainly shall we start sec-

tioning the third dimension into layers; however thin the layers may be they will always possess some thickness, *i.e.*, depth, some invisible and intangible inward. And, if we succeed in obtaining layers so tenuous that the sight goes through them, then we shall see neither depth nor surface, but absolute transparency, or, what comes to the same, nothing. For, just as the deep requires a surface behind which to be hidden, so the surface or superficies, in order to exist, must have something to extend over and to hide.

This is a truism, but not altogether otiose. For there are still persons who insist upon our exhibiting all things to them as clearly as they can see an orange placed in front of their eyes. And it is a fact that, if by seeing we understand, as they understand, a mere sensory function, neither they, nor anyone has ever seen an orange. An orange is a spherical body and as such possesses obverse and reverse. Will they claim to have obverse and reverse simultaneously apparent? With our eyes we can see a part of the orange, but the whole fruit is never present to us in sensuous form; the major part of the orange is latent to our sight.

There is thus no need to resort to subtle and metaphysical objects in order to show that things have different modes of presenting themselves to us; but each in its order equally clear. The third dimension of a body presents itself to us with the same clarity as the other two, and yet if we possessed no other means of seeing than the passive one of strict vision, things, or certain qualities of things, would for us simply not exist.

Brooks and Orioles

Is not now thought a dialectical faun chasing the essence of the wood like a fleeing nymph? Is not the fruition experienced by thought pressing an idea's naked form close akin to that of love?

Our recognition of a wood as a fugitive entity, ever absent, ever hidden—a conjunct of potentialities—has not put us in possession of the complete idea of the wood. If what is deep and latent is to exist for us, it must be presented to us, and its presentation must be in such form that it shall not lose its quality of depth and latency.

As I was saying, it is the irrevocable fate of depth that it should be manifested in superficial characters. Let us now see in what manner this is achieved.

This water hurrying at my feet utters now a gentle plaint as it chafes the pebbles and bends a crystal arm about the oak-tree's roots. It is but a moment since an oriole passed in among the leaves like a king's daughter entering her palace, and now the bird utters a thick, throatful cry, so musical you might take it for a thrill torn from the

nightingale's song—a short, sudden sound which for one instant fills the whole perceptible volume of the wood. In like manner the whole volume of our consciousness is filled with a pulse of pain.

These two sounds are now before me; but they are not alone. They are mere lines or points of sonority which in virtue of their real plenitude and special brilliancy stand out against the multitudinous background of slighter sounds and murmurings interwoven with them.

If from the song of the oriole perched above my head and the babble of the water flowing at my feet I let my attention stray to other sounds, I encounter once more an oriole's song and the low whispering of water fretting its rugged channel. But how is it with these new sounds? One of them I recognize unhesitantly for the song of an oriole, but it lacks brilliance, plenitude; its sonority does not stab the air with the same forcefulness, does not fill the whole ambit as did the other, but rather glides surreptitiously and timorously away. This new plaint of running water I likewise recognize, but, oh, it is pain to hear. Is it some valetudinarian spring? It is a sound like the other, but more broken, more sobbing, less rich with inner tones, soulless, it would seem, and blurred; at times it has not strength to reach my hearing, poor weakling whisper fainting by the way.

Such is the presence of these new sounds; such they are as mere impressions. But as I listened, I did not dawdle to describe them, as I have done here. Without need for deliberation, I no sooner hear them than I involve them in an act of ideal interpretation, and, casting them far from me, I hear them as distant.

If I confine myself to receiving them passively into my hearing, these two pairs of sounds are at once present and proximate. But the differing sonorous quality of both pairs invites me to distance them, attributing to them distinctive spatial quality. It is therefore I that by my own act maintain them in virtual distension; failing this act, distance would vanish and indiscriminately occupy a single plane.

It follows hence that distance is a virtual quality of certain present things, a quality which they acquire solely in virtue of a subjective act. A sound is not distant; it is I who make it so.

The visual distance of the trees and the paths seeking the heart of the woodland afford matter for analogous reflections. All this depth of distance exists in virtue of my collaboration, and is born of a structure of relationships interposed between these and those sensations by my intellect.

There is thus a whole portion of reality which is offered to us without other effort on our part than the opening of our eyes and ears—the world of pure impressions. We are right in terming it the patent world. But there is a transcendent world constituted by structures of impressions, which, if it is latent, is none the less real. We are bound,

that is certain, in order that this higher world may exist for us, to open something more than our eyes, and to bring to bear acts demanding greater effort; but the measure of this effort neither confers reality on that world, nor can it take it away. The deep world is as clear as the superficial, only it exacts more of ourselves.

* * *

GERMANY

Introductory Note

THROUGH all German literature there runs a note of high seriousness, and German essays, in particular, have a powerful didactic bias. Even in the work of a humorist like Jean Paul the definite purpose underlying it is very near the surface, and it is impossible to forget for long that the great German writers are pre-eminently teachers. More than that, they are most methodical in their instruction. They not only know the truth which they want to convey, but they make every literary form—drama, romance, lyric, essay—a channel for conveying it. As a result, ideals and loftiness of purpose are never missing. There is, however, a lack of that joyous inconsequence and sublime ease which have produced elsewhere some of the most delightful and characteristic essays.

This is easily accounted for if we consider the circumstances. German literature has suffered again and again from waves of pedantry. The genuine love-songs of the Swabian minstrels were immersed in the uninspired exactnesses of the schools of the Mastersingers. The sixteenth century, when at last the German language seemed to be firmly established and Luther's Bible became the touchstone of German prose, was followed by a barren period when scholastic influences once more became predominant. The Renaissance, which might have given a totally different turn to German literature, found the country suffering from the ravages of the Thirty Years' War and too much occupied with the struggle for existence to think about letters. Literature was made the affair of select coteries, quite apart from the main stream of the national life, and Latin once again bid fair to oust German. It was not until the eighteenth century that German letters really had a fair chance, and since then there has been a spate of notable work as if the authors felt that they had to make up for lost time. And if we are tempted to stigmatize some of it as heavy, we must remember that the Germans are essentially philosophers. Kant, Hegel, Lessing, Herder, Goethe, Schiller—all these have endeavoured to resolve the wayward scheme of things into some sort of system, and the slightest and most casual of their essays—if they can be accused of ever doing anything that was slight and casual—has been affected by this main purpose.

* * *

JOHANN G. HERDER

HERDER was born in East Prussia in 1744. He studied philosophy under Kant and became assistant pastor of a church in Riga. Later he was invited to join the distinguished company of literary men that had gathered at Weimar under the patronage of the Grand Duke Karl August. Here he produced a number of essays and treatises as well as some verse. He died in 1803.

The present essay has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

ON THE SIMILARITY OF MEDIEVAL ENGLISH AND GERMAN POETRY

IF, TO begin with, we regard the old Britons as a race whose language and style of poetry are peculiar to themselves, as can be seen in their history and in the remains of Welsh poetry, we know that the Anglo-Saxons were originally Germans, and consequently that the stock was German in mind and language. Not only did they mix with the Britons, but there soon came hordes of Danish settlers, of more northerly Germanic race, who were of the same stock. The later Norman invasion entirely transformed England and stamped on it the impress of Norse manners which had been remoulded in the south. Thus England underwent the influence of the northern or Germanic mind in three nations, epochs, and stages of culture. And does England not contain the essence of Northern language and poetry in this triple alloy?

This is a hint from former times to which Germany may well listen. The vast treasure of the Anglo-Saxon language in England is also ours, and, since the Anglo-Saxons settled there a couple of centuries before our alleged collector and destroyer of Bardic songs, Charlemagne, are we to imagine that everything to be found there is only the work of clerics? Are there in this great store, which is still unexplored, no further fragments, hints, or finger posts? Even if that were true, how useful would the study of their language, poetry, and literature be for us Germans!

Where, however, shall we find external encouragement and opportunity? How far behind the English we are in motives of this kind! Where are our Parkers, our Seldens, Spelmans, Whelocks, Hickes? Where are they now? Stuss's plan for a cheaper edition of the Anglo-Saxon writers did not come to anything; Lindenbrog's Anglo-Saxon Glossary lies unprinted, and how much have we Germans still to do

in connexion with our own linguistic store before we attend to side-shoots! How much still lies in the Imperial Library that is hardly known even by name! And how long is it to be before we derive the least advantage from the fact that there is so much German blood in the royal families of Europe?

Richard Hurd has explained the origin and form of the medieval poetry of chivalry by the condition of Europe at the time, but though his explanation is good in some ways, it is far from complete. It was the feudal constitution that gave birth later to the age of chivalry, and it is very faithfully described in the preface to our *Heldenbuch*,[1] in a fairy-tale atmosphere of giants, dwarfs, monsters, and dragons. I know of no work in which this constitution is treated in a manner which characterizes the mind, poetry, and customs of Germany and pursues the theme in all its features in other countries. But there is, to be sure, nothing we lack more than a history of the German language and its poetry. And, among our numerous academies and societies, how few are there which take the trouble, even in the case of important problems, to clear individual fields and point the way to unexplored paths!

I know quite well the laborious preparatory work that has already been done, especially in the legal-diplomatic-historical field, but this all needs to be utilized and given life. The whole of our medieval history is pathological, and mainly in the head, *i.e.*, the Emperor and some of the Imperial Estates. The physiology of the whole national body, on the other hand—what a different thing that is! And when we consider how mind, education, morals, diction, and language were related to it—what an ocean to explore, what beautiful islands and unknown localities are to be found dotted here and there! We have no Curne de Sainte Palaye on our knighthood, no Warton on our medieval poetry. Goldast, Schilter, Schatz, Opitz, and Eckhart have left excellent footprints; the manuscripts of Freher have been dispersed; some rich libraries dispersed and plundered. When will our treasures of this kind be collected, and where is the man working (he is perhaps an obscure youth) who will adorn the goddess of our Fatherland with them and present them in this way to the nation? To be sure, if we had only possessed Shakespeare and Spenser in the Middle Ages, we would not have lacked a Theobald, an Upton, a Warton, or a Johnson. But that is just the problem—why had we no Shakespeare or Spenser?

In what way did the cast of thought in the ballad romances, which spread across Europe, influence Germany in particular? Can we prove that she really had her favourite heroes, her original themes, her na-

[1] A German collection of medieval heroic poems.

tional and nursery mythologies, and that she stamped her own impress on their development? Parcival, Melusine, Magelona, King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, the legends of Roland—all these come from abroad; have the Germans then always been destined only to translate, only to copy? Our *Heldenbuch* sings of Theodoric, but he is also celebrated by all the other Northern peoples, and for how far back has this hero been sung in the German and Romance languages? Does he belong to us, as Roland, Arthur, Fingal, Achilles, and Aeneas belong to other nations? Even at Hastings the Anglo-Saxons sang of the Horne Child, whose legend is to be found in the Harleian manuscripts at Oxford; where does he come from, and to what extent does he belong to us? I look forward with infinite pleasure to the work of a young researcher in this field, and, in addition to critical acumen, I hope he may be endowed with a sense of complete tolerance for the thought and morals of every age and permitted access to the libraries of Rome, Oxford, Vienna, St. Gall, and the Escurial. O medieval spirit of knighthood, in what palace would you be weaving!

The vulgar legends, fairy tales, and mythology of the people also belong to this category. They are, to some extent, the result of popular superstition, of a sensuous outlook, energy and instincts, where dreams take the place of knowledge, faith takes the place of actual observation, and the whole, undivided, unsophisticated soul is at work. They are consequently a great theme for the historian of humanity, the poet, the poetic theorist, and the philosopher. Legends of a particular kind have been spread by the Northern peoples throughout many countries and at different periods, but in each country and at each period their development has varied. How does this apply to Germany? Where did the commonest and the most unusual popular legends originate? How did they travel? How were they spread and what was the manner of their distribution? Germany in general and some individual German provinces in particular exhibit the strangest resemblances and deviations; provinces where the spirit of the Edda with its monsters, magicians, giantesses, and Valkyries is completely present even in the tone of the story; other provinces where the legends are less crude, almost Ovidian metamorphoses, where tender adventures receive a refined dress. The old Wend, Swabian, Saxon, and Holstein mythology, in so far as it still lives in popular legends and songs, would be a veritable mine for the poet and the orator, the moralist and the philosopher, if it were faithfully recorded, examined with insight, and fruitfully utilized.

If England and Germany have much in common in this field also, how much further would we not have progressed if we had made use of our popular opinions and legends as the Britons have done, and if our poetry had been so entirely built up on them as Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare built on popular belief, and took from it their creative

material! Where are our Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare? How far beneath them are our Mastersingers! And even when the songs of the latter contain gold, who has collected them? Who troubles about them? Yet these chief arteries of poetry in both nations resemble each other so much, even to turns of phrase, rimes, favourite metres, and way of looking at things, as every one must know who is acquainted with the tales of chivalry, ballads, and fairy tales of both peoples. The whole tone of these poetic literatures is so similar that one can often translate word for word, phrase for phrase, inversion for inversion.

In all the countries of Europe the spirit of chivalry has only one vocabulary, and it is the same with the stories to which it gave birth—ballad, romance—everywhere the same expressions, the same kind of terminations and liberties in the metre, in the rejection of accents and makeshift syllables, even the same favourite pictures, romantic plants and herbs, animals and birds. Whoever reads Shakespeare with this end in view and has only read, say, what Warton has to say about Spenser, and knows only the most inferior of the romances and songs of our people, will be able to provide sufficient examples and proofs. It is clear that there would result from this comparison a stream of observations concerning the development of both languages and the authors who write in them, if only a linguistic society or academy of *belles lettres* would occupy itself with this trifling matter. This is neither the time nor place to do so.

I will only say this: if we had at least collected the writings which would provide these observations and this useful information—but where are they? How eagerly the English have collected their old songs and melodies, how eagerly they have printed, reprinted, utilized, and read them! Ramsay, Percy, and others have been welcomed with loud praises, and modern poets like Shenstone, Mason, and Mallet have familiarized themselves with the manner. Dryden, Pope, Addison, and Swift have used it in their own way; the older poets Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton have lived in songs of this kind, and other noble men like Sir Philip Sidney, Selden, and how many others, have collected, praised, and admired them. From seeds of this kind the best lyric, dramatic, mythical, and epic poetry of the British has sprung, and we—we surfeited, sated, classical Germans? Print some songs in Germany such as Ramsay, Percy, and others have in part printed, and hear what our classical critics of taste will say!

There is, to be sure, no lack of general desire. When there was all that to-do about the bards some time ago, what a clamour there was for the songs which Charlemagne is supposed to have collected! Though no one knew anything about them, how they were praised, imitated, and sung! It was supposed to be as easy to discover them as though they had only been laid aside for a time, and nothing less was hoped

from them than a German Ossian. Everything is excellent so long as it is far away! If a Macpherson were suddenly to arise in Bavaria, or in Tyrol, and were to sing for us the songs of a German Ossian, he would achieve success and would possibly carry us with him to that extent. But if these songs were in the sort of language that one would necessarily expect on the analogy of Schilter's collection, if they had to be studied first of all as a magic reflection of former times in the mirror of the commentators, to be spelled out as living song in the mouth of the bards (since language before Otfried was undisciplined), and this without causing more marvel than the Gothic gospels of Ulfilas in our churches—how many panegyrists and disciples would withdraw immediately and say, "I don't know you! I expected a sort of classical Ossian."

Am I wrong, or have we not already had a perfect example of this? When the medieval Manessian Manuscript came to light, what a treasure of literature, love, and joy in the German tongue appeared in these poets of the Swabian age! If the names of Schöpflin and Bodmer had no more merit than that of having made these poems known, this discovery ought to endear them to the nation, especially on account of the trouble taken by the latter and the zeal he showed. But has this collection of old songs of our Fatherland produced the impression it should have done? Bodmer presented us with the treasure itself, and gave us credit for being able to carry on ourselves without difficulty. He was mistaken; it is too much to expect us to abandon our classical language and learn another kind of German in order to read a few love poets! And so these poems are practically only known to the nation by the imitations of the incomparable Gleim, and a few others through translation. The treasure itself lies there almost unknown, unused, and unread.

So we have no living poetry at all from early times in which modern poetry could take root like a branch on the national trunk, while other nations have progressed with the centuries and have developed on their own soil, on the faith and taste of the people, from the remains of earlier times, from national productions. Their poetry and language have thereby become national, the voice of the people has been treasured and made use of, and they have gained a much wider public for these matters than we have. We poor Germans have always been destined never to belong to ourselves, to remain always the legislators and servants of foreign nations, the arbiters of their fate, and their bought slaves, drained and bleeding.

—Jordan, Po, and Tiber,
How oft have streamed
With German blood
And German souls!

And thus German song, like everything else German, became

> A cry of Pan! an echo
> From the reeds of Jordan
> And of Tiber,
> Of Thames and Seine,—

the German mind

> A hireling mind,
> That chews the cud
> That other feet have crushed.—

The fine rich olive tree, the sweet vine, the fig went, as though they were brambles, to soar over the trees, and where are their fruit and their goodness now? Where are their strength, their sap, their sweetness? They have been and are being crushed in other lands.

Sublime and noble language! Great and mighty race! It gave morals, laws, inventions, rulers to the whole of Europe, and yet accepts the domination of all Europe. Who has thought it worth while to use these materials to fashion himself by their aid in our likeness? With us everything develops *a priori,* our poetry and classical culture fell from Heaven. When a beginning was made in the last century with the fashioning of our language and poetry—in the last century? Why, what more could they have done, if that had been their object, effectively to exterminate the last traces of our national spirit than has actually been done this year? And now, when we imagine ourselves to have reached such a high degree of respect in the eyes of other peoples, when the French, whom we have so long copied, are now, thanks and praise be to God, again copying us and devouring their own garbage, when we are enjoying the good fortune to see German Courts beginning to spell in German and to use a few German names—Heavens, what a people we are! Anyone who took an interest in the common folk, their daily food of fairy tales, prepossessions, songs, and uncouth speech, would be regarded as a barbarian, who came to defile our syllable-counting poetry, like a screech owl among our handsome, gay-plumaged singing birds.

Yet it will always be a truism that the field of literature which relates to the people must be popular if it is not to be a mere classical bubble. It will always remain a truism that when we have no people, we have no public, no nation, no language, and no poetry which belongs to us, lives in us, and affects us. We shall be writing all the time for bookworms and dainty reviewers, from whose mouths and stomachs we shall receive it back; we shall be composing ballads, odes, heroic poems, ecclesiastical and gastronomic songs that nobody understands, nobody wants, and nobody feels. Our classical literature is a bird of paradise,

just as showy, just as agreeable, soaring in the upper air and—without foot on the German earth.

How different are other nations in this respect! What songs Percy, for example, has collected in his *Reliques* that I did not dare to introduce to our cultured Germany! To us they would have been intolerable, though they are not so to the English. They are old national pieces, which the people sang and still sing, and from which one can therefore learn to understand their mind and the language of their emotions; some of them may even have been known to Shakespeare, who possibly borrowed from them some motives. With tender sympathy the English translate themselves back into the past, they descend to the mind of the people, they read, hear, smile occasionally, enjoy, or reflect and learn. Everywhere they see from what crude, insignificant, despised seeds the splendid forest of their national literature has sprung, on what national marrow Spenser and Shakespeare were fed.

Great Empire, Empire of ten nations, Germany! You have no Shakespeare, but have you no songs of your forefathers either of which you might boast? Swiss, Swabians, Franconians, Bavarians, Westphalians, Saxons, Wends, and Prussians—have you all nothing? Have the voices of your fathers died away in the dust? Valiant race, noble in virtue and in speech, has your soul left no traces down the ages?

No doubt is possible! They have existed, perhaps they still exist, but buried under the mire, unappreciated, despised. We only have to set to work, seek, and collect, before we have all received a classical education, sing French songs, dance French minuets, or even all compose hexameters and Horatian odes. The light of so-called culture illumines every corner, and things of this kind are only to be found in corners. So set to, brothers, and show our nation what it is and what it is not: how it thought and felt, or how it still thinks and feels. What splendid things the English found when they began their search! Not made to be set down on paper, indeed, and hardly legible when they were, but full of vitality, sprung from the people as a whole, living and working among them. Who has not heard or read of the wonders of the bards and skalds, the impression produced by the troubadours, the minstrels, and the Mastersingers? How the people stood and listened! What did they not see, or think they saw, in the songs! And with what holy fervour they therefore heard the songs and stories, learned from them and handed down speech, ways of thinking, morals, and achievements. Song and melody were indeed simpler, but they were more vigorous, more stirring, full of movement and action, an urgent appeal to the heart, speaking to the open truth-intoxicated soul with grave accents or piercing it with sharp arrows. You modern ballad-makers, scribblers of hymns and odes, can you do that? Can you produce that effect? Will you ever produce that effect with the means

you employ? For you we are all to doze tranquilly in our armchairs, play with our dolls, or exhibit your metrical constructions in our cabinets, to hang in dainty idleness in a classical gilt frame.

If Bürger, who has a profound understanding of the means and the language by which the people can be stirred, were to give us a German poem full of heroic action, full of the vigour and movement of these small songs, who would not run to listen and wonder? And he can give it to us. His ballads and songs, and even his translation of Homer, are full of these accents, and the epic, even the drama, of all races springs only from the popular story, ballad, or song. Would we not have made some progress even if our history and rhetoric had only adopted, or rather retained, the simple, vigorous, unhurried, yet purposeful movement of the German mind in word and deed which is already to be found in the old chronicles, speeches, and writings! Every Machiavelli, after all, could derive for himself a system of ethics and an elegant pragmatic philosophy. Even our system of education would have become more German, richer in materials of this kind, more vigorous and simple in its power to stir the senses and engage the most vital forces, and I think our forbears would rejoice in their graves and bless the new world of their more veritable sons. Finally, we should find a new way to the songs of other peoples, whom we know so little and whom we can only get to know from their songs. The map of humanity has been vastly extended from the point of view of ethnology. We know of a great many nations besides the Greeks and Romans, but how do we know them? From the outside, through distorted copper engravings and second-hand information which resembles the engravings? Or from the inside, through their own souls, through feeling, speech, and action? So it should be, but it isn't. The pragmatic historian and writer of travel books describes, pictures, and portrays; he always describes things as he sees them, out of his own head, one-sided, as conditioned by his education, and he therefore invents when he least desires to invent.

The only remedy is easy and obvious. All unorganized peoples *sing* and *act,* they sing the things they do and their singing is the performance of an action. Their songs are the archives of the race, the treasure house of their science and religion, of their theogony and cosmogonies, of the deeds of their fathers and the events of their history. They bear the impress of the racial soul and present a picture of domestic life in joy and in grief, at the marriage bed and at the graveside. Nature has given them consolation for many of the evils that oppress them, and a substitute for many of the so-called blessings that we enjoy, namely, love of liberty, leisure, ecstasy, and song. It is there that they all picture themselves, since they there appear as they are. The warlike race sings of deeds, the weaker one of love. The keen-minded race composes riddles, the imaginative one allegories, parables, and living

pictures. The passionate race can only create works of passion, as a race which exists under terrible conditions creates terrible gods. A small collection of such songs from the mouth of each people, dealing with the chief circumstances and actions of their life, in the original language, properly understood and explained, and with musical accompaniment—how this would enliven the articles "concerning the mind and manners of the nation, its science and language, games and dances, music and theology," that the student of mankind, in spite of all books of travel, is most eager to read! It would help us to a better understanding than all the gossip of the authors of books of travel, or a version of the Lord's Prayer taken down in the native language. Just as natural history describes plants and animals, so here the races would describe themselves. We should receive a visual idea of everything, and, through the similarity or variation of these songs in language, content, and melody, especially in their conceptions of the creation of the universe and the history of their fathers, to what a considerable extent and with what certainty we should be able to deduce the descent, propagation, and mingling of the various races!

Yet even in Europe there are still a number of nations which have not been studied or described in this way. Esthonians and Letts, Wends and Slavs, Poles and Russians, Frisians and Prussians—their popular songs have not been collected as have those of the Icelanders, the Danes, and the Swedes, to say nothing of the English, Irish, and British, or even the southern races. Yet among them there are so many persons whose work and office it is to study the language, the customs, and the mind, the ancient prepossessions and practices of their country. They would by this means provide other nations with the best of living grammars, the best dictionary and natural history of their people. They must, however, give it as it is, in its original language and with an adequate commentary, without abuse or mockery, with no adornment or refinement, and, where possible, with the accompanying music and with everything that belongs to the life of the people. If they have no use for it, others have.

Lessing has expressed his opinion of two Lithuanian songs; Kleist has imitated a song of the Lapps and one of the Cannibals; and Gerstenberg has translated some very beautiful pieces from the old Danish. And what a fine harvest must still remain! If, as Leibniz declares, human sagacity and understanding are never more active than in games, then the human heart and the full power of the imagination are truly never more active than in the natural songs of such peoples.

Finally, samples and collections of this kind are not unuseful for a grasp of the rules of poetry, which we have derived mostly from the Greeks and Romans. The Greeks were also once, if we like to call it so, savages, and even in their golden age there is far more of nature than is to be discovered by the blinking eyes of scholiasts and classical

authors. Homer based his poems on old legends, and his hexameter was nothing but the metre of the Greek ballad. The war-songs of Tyrtaeus are Greek ballads, and if Arion, Orpheus, and Amphion really existed, they were noble Greek priests. The old comedy was derived from satiric songs and mummeries full of dancing and ferment; tragedy developed out of choruses and dithyrambs, *i.e.*, old lyrical popular legends and mythology. Now if Sappho and a Lithuanian girl sing of love in the same way, then the rules of their singing must be the true ones, they are of the essence of love and reach to the ends of the earth. If Tyrtaeus and the Icelander sing the same battle-song, then the melody is the true one and it reaches to the ends of the earth. But if there is an essential dissimilarity, if an attempt is made to foist off on us national forms, or even learned compromises or the products of a single corner of the world, as the laws of God and Nature, ought we not to be allowed to distinguish between the image of the Madonna and the ass that carries the image?

* * *

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE

GOETHE was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main in 1749. He followed in his father's steps and studied law, but his real interests were literature, chemistry, anatomy, and antiquities. In 1773 *Goetz von Berlichingen* appeared—a play which heralded a new period in German dramatic literature. In the following year he published the sentimental novel, *The Sorrows of Werther*. In 1775 he was invited to Weimar by the Duke, Karl August, and spent the remainder of his life there in manifold activities. He died in 1832, and his body lies in the ducal vault at Weimar near that of his friend Schiller. The work by which he is most widely known is *Faust*, but the clearness and simplicity of his prose made him a model for all the writers who followed, and his influence on German letters has been most salutary.

The present extract is taken from the Autobiography—*Dichtung und Wahrheit*—and has been specially translated for the present volume by Dr. William Rose.

WERTHER

WHEN it came to depicting that weariness of life which people experience without there being any dire distress to force them to it, the author naturally hit upon the idea of representing his mood in epistolary form; for all ill-humour is engendered and nurtured by solitude. Whoever gives way to it shuns all contradiction, and what is

there more at variance with his disposition than the cheerfulness of company? The enjoyment which others find in life is to him a painful reproach, and so he is driven back upon his own soul by the very thing which should draw him out of himself. Should he express himself on the matter at all, he will do so by letter, for no one will directly object to a written effusion, whether gay or peevish, while a reply containing counter arguments will furnish the recluse with an opportunity to confirm himself in his vagaries and to become fortified in his obduracy. The reason why the letters of Werther, written in this spirit, have so varied a charm, is probably because the diversity of their contents was first thoroughly discussed in such imaginary dialogues with several individuals and then, in the work itself, are addressed only to *one* friend and participator. It would hardly be advisable to say anything more about the treatment of the much-discussed little book, but something can be said about the contents.

Disgust with life has both its physical and moral causes, the former of which we will leave to the physician and the latter to the philosopher to investigate. The subject has often been treated, and we will only notice the principal point where the phenomenon is expressed most clearly. All enjoyment of life is based on the periodic appearance of external things. The alternation of night and day, of the seasons, of blossom and fruit, and of everything else that we meet with from epoch to epoch in order that we can and should find enjoyment therein—these are the real mainsprings of our earthly existence. The more receptive we are to these enjoyments, the happier do we feel, but if these phenomena revolve before us in their variety without our participating in them, if we are unreceptive to these agreeable offerings, then there ensues the greatest of evils, the most serious of maladies—we regard life as a nauseous burden. It is related of a certain Englishman that he hanged himself to be free of dressing and undressing every day. I knew an honest gardener, in charge of a large park, who once cried out in ill-humour, "Am I for ever to see these clouds blowing from West to East!" One of our worthiest countrymen is said to have been irritated that the spring continually returns clothed in green and to have wished that it might for a change appear red. These are really the symptoms of weariness with life, which not infrequently results in suicide, and, in the case of introspective thinkers, was less rare than one would credit.

Nothing occasions this weariness more than the re-emergence of love. It is said, with justice, that one's first love is the only real one, for in and through the second the highest meaning of love is lost. The idea of the eternal and infinite by which it is really exalted and supported is destroyed, and it appears transitory like everything that returns after a period of absence. The separation of the sensual from the moral, which, in our complicated civilization, causes dissonance in

the sensations of love and desire, engenders in this case also an exaggeration which can give rise to nothing but harm.

A young man realizes, further, if not in himself, at least by the example of others, that moral periods change just as much as the seasons. The favour of the great, the patronage of the powerful, the advancement of the active, the inclination of the crowd, the love of the individual—they all fluctuate and we cannot tie them down any more than the sun, the moon, or the stars; and yet these things are not mere phenomena of Nature; we lose them through our own fault or that of others, through accident or fate, but they do change and we are never sure of them.

What worries the sensitive youth most, however, is the continual emergence of our failings, since it takes so long before we learn that we are adding to them at the same time as we are developing our virtues. Our failings are the foundations of our virtues, their roots so to speak, and the secret ramifications of the former run parallel in their strength and variety to the visible ramifications of the latter. Since we mostly practise our virtues consciously and voluntarily, while we are unconsciously surprised by our failings, we seldom take pleasure in the former, and the latter, on the other hand, are a perpetual source of distress and torment. Here lies the most serious obstacle to self-knowledge, which is thereby rendered almost impossible. And if one imagines in addition a fiery youthful temperament, a fantasy easily lamed by certain matters, together with the fluctuating influences of everyday life, it will not be thought unnatural if there is an impatient struggle to escape from such a dilemma.

Such gloomy considerations, however, which lead whoever yields to them to no definite goal, could not have become so firmly rooted in the minds of German youths if the melancholy occupation with them had not received some external stimulus and encouragement. This came from English literature, especially from English poetry, whose great merits are accompanied by a pensive gloom that is communicated to everybody who occupies himself with it. The intellectual Briton grows up amid an environment which stimulates all his energies; he realizes sooner or later that he must summon all his intelligence in order to cope with it. How many of their poets have led a dissolute and boisterous youth, only to find themselves soon justified in lamenting the vanity of earthly things! How many of them have occupied themselves in commerce, in Parliament, at Court, in the Cabinet, in ambassadorial posts, have played major and minor parts, have taken part in internal disturbances and in constitutional or government changes, and have undergone experiences, either personal or in connexion with their friends and patrons, which were more often sad than pleasant! How many have been exiled, dispossessed, imprisoned, or ruined!

Even to be a witness of such important events tends to make a man earnest, and can earnestness lead to any further end than the consideration of the transitoriness of life and the insignificance of all earthly things! The German is also earnest, and so he found English poetry extremely suited to his temperament, and, since it sprang from a loftier condition, he found it imposing. There is to be found in it a great and thoroughly capable intelligence, versed in knowledge of the world, a profound and tender disposition, an admirable will-power, and a passionate activity, the most splendid qualities that can be attributed to gifted and cultured people. All these things taken together do not, however, make a poet. True poetry is heralded by its power to liberate us, like a secular gospel, by its inner serenity and outward ease, from the earthly burdens which oppress us. Like a balloon it raises us, together with the ballast which clings to us, to higher regions, and gives us a bird's eye view of the confused labyrinths of the earth spread out below. The most cheerful works have the same purpose as the most serious ones, namely to moderate both pleasure and grief by means of a successful and ingenious representation. If the majority of English poems, mostly of a moral and didactic nature, are considered in this sense, they will be found to exhibit, as a rule, only a melancholy weariness of life. Not only Young's *Night Thoughts,* where the theme is worked out in a remarkable manner, but also the other poems of contemplation diverge, before one is aware of it, into this dismal sphere, where the intellect is assigned a problem that it is not adequate to solve since even religion, which it can at any rate construct for itself, leaves it in the lurch. Whole volumes could be compiled to serve as a commentary to the terrible text:

> Then old age and experience, hand in hand,
> Lead him to death and make him understand,
> After a search so painful and so long,
> That all his life he has been in the wrong.[1]

The misanthropy of the English poets is completed, and the disagreeable feeling of disgust with everything spread throughout their works, by the fact that there is so much dissension in their civic life and they all have to devote the best part of their lives to one party or another. Since such a writer may not praise or commend his own party or cause for fear of rousing envy and ill-will, he uses his talent to calumniate his opponents as much as possible, sharpening, and indeed poisoning, his satirical weapons to the extent of his power. If this is done by both parties the world between is destroyed and eliminated, so that, to put it mildly, it is impossible to discover anything in a large and intellectually active community except foolishness and frenzy. Even their tender poems are occupied with dismal matters. Here there ex-

[1] From *A Satire Against Mankind*, attributed to Rochester.

pires an abandoned maiden, there a faithful lover is drowned or else devoured by a shark before he can reach his sweetheart; and when a poet like Gray settles down in a village churchyard and again strikes up the well-known airs, he can be sure of collecting round him a number of the friends of melancholy. Milton's *Allegro* must first disperse his depression in forcible verses before he can attain to a very moderate joy, and even the cheerful Goldsmith loses himself in elegiac feeling when his *Deserted Village* depicts a lost Paradise, sought again by his *Traveller* throughout the whole world, as no less sad than lovely.

I do not doubt that it will be possible to show me as a contrast cheerful works and serene poems; but most of them, and the best of them, certainly belong to the older period, and the modern ones, which might come under that heading, likewise tend to satire, are bitter, and contemptuous, in particular, of women.

These earnest poems, which undermined human nature, were the favourites that we chose above all others, one seeking the lighter elegiac lament, which accorded with his temper, another the burdensome hopelessness of despair. Strangely enough, our father and teacher, Shakespeare, who knows so well how to create a serene atmosphere, himself strengthened this depression. Hamlet and his monologues remained spectres, which worked their uncanny will in the minds of the younger generation. Every one knew the chief passages by heart and liked to declaim them, and every one believed he had the right to be as melancholy as the Prince of Denmark, even though he had not seen a ghost and had no royal father to avenge.

In order that all this gloom should not lack a suitable *milieu,* Ossian had enticed us to the *ultima Thule,* where, on the grey, unending heath, under projecting, moss-covered tombstones, we saw all around the grass waving weirdly in the wind with the dark and clouded sky above. It was only by moonlight that this Caledonian night was turned to day; departed heroes, maidens who had faded into the tomb, hovered round us, until we at last thought we saw the spirit of Loda in his actual and terrible shape.

In such an element, in such an environment, tortured by unsatisfied passions amidst inclinations and pursuits of such a kind, lacking external incitement to any considerable activity, with the sole prospect of leading a dragging and unintellectual, *bourgeois* existence, we accepted with ill-humoured arrogance the idea that we could, in any case, quit this life at will when it no longer had anything to offer us, and thus we were able to put up, meagrely enough, with the iniquity and *ennui* of existence. It was because this state of mind was so general that *Werther* produced the great effect it did, when it took root everywhere and depicted openly and tangibly the manner and nature of a morbid, youthful madness. How closely the English were acquainted with this

state of wretchedness is shown by the significant lines which were written before the appearance of *Werther:*

> To griefs congenial prone,
> More wounds than Nature gave he knew,
> While misery's form his fancy drew
> In dark ideal hues and horrors not its own.[1]

Suicide is an occurrence in human nature which, however much has been said and done about it, yet demands the sympathy of every one and must be discussed again in every generation. Montesquieu allows to his heroes and great men the right to kill themselves if they deem fit, and he declares that everybody must, after all, be free to conclude the fifth act of his tragedy at whatever point he pleases. In this case, however, it is not a question of such persons as have led an active and important life, have employed their days in the service of a great state or for the cause of freedom, and who can hardly be blamed if, as soon as the idea which inspires them disappears from this world, they wish to pursue it in the next. We have here to do with men who, from lack of activity, in the most peaceful circumstances in the world, have, through exaggerated claims on themselves, conceived a distaste for life. Since I myself was in like case and know best what tortures I suffered, what exertion it caused me to escape, I will not conceal the thoughts I deliberately indulged in concerning the different ways of committing suicide.

It is so unnatural that a man should tear himself away from himself, that he should not only harm but should destroy himself, that he generally has recourse to mechanical means in order to put his intention into practice. When Ajax falls on his sword, it is the weight of his body which performs the last service for him. When the warrior binds his shield-bearer not to let him fall into the hands of the enemy, it is also an external force of which he is assuring himself, only a moral instead of a physical one. Women cool their despair in water, and the highly mechanical agency of a gun ensures swiftness of action with a minimum of exertion. Hanging is not referred to willingly because it is an ignoble death. It is most likely to be met with in England because people are so accustomed, from youth up, to seeing people hanged without dishonour. Poison and the opening of the veins are ways of parting slowly from life, and the most ingenious, swift, and painless death by means of an asp was worthy of a queen who had passed her life amid gaiety and splendour. All these, however, are external devices —enemies with which a man enters into an alliance against himself.

When I pondered over all these methods and otherwise delved into history, I found that among all those who had taken their own lives, none had done so with greater nobility and freedom of mind than the

[1] From *The Suicide* by Thomas Wharton.

Emperor Otho. Though he had been out-generalled, he was by no means in an extremity. Yet he resolved for the benefit of the state, which to some extent already belonged to him, and in order to spare many thousands of others, to quit the world. He gave his friends a gay banquet, and the next morning he was found with a sharp dagger thrust into his heart by his own hand. This unique deed appeared to me worthy of imitation, and I convinced myself that whoever could not act in the matter like Otho should not permit himself to leave the world of his own free will. This conviction saved me not so much from the intention as from the whim of suicide, which, during those splendid times of peace, had crept insidiously into the minds of a leisured and youthful generation. In my collection of weapons, which was pretty considerable, I possessed a valuable and well-sharpened dagger. I always laid it next to my bed, and before I put out the light I tried whether I could not sink the sharp point a couple of inches into my breast. As I was never able to do so, I at last ridiculed myself, cast off all my hypochondriac caprices, and decided to continue living. In order to be able to do this calmly, however, I had to carry into effect some poetic task, in which everything that I had felt, thought, and imagined about this important matter should find verbal expression. For this purpose I collected all the elements which had been fermenting in me for a couple of years, I visualized to myself the situations that had caused me most affliction and anguish,—but I could not give them shape, there was lacking some incident, some plot in which to incorporate them.

Suddenly I learned of the death of Jerusalem. Immediately after the general rumour there reached me the most exact and detailed description of the occurrence—and at that moment the plan for *Werther* was in being. The whole shot together from all sides and became a solid mass, like water in a container which is just at freezing point and is immediately turned to firm ice by the slightest shake. It was all the more opportune that I should hold fast to this advantageous framework that had come to me so strangely, and that I should picture to myself and execute in every detail a work of such significant and varied content, since I already found myself in another painful situation which afforded even less hope than the others and prophesied nothing but renewed depression, to say nothing of actual annoyance.

It is always unfortunate when we enter into new relations to which we are not accustomed; we are often drawn against our will into a false sympathy, we are worried by the equivocal nature of the situation, and yet we are unable to see a means either of rendering it satisfactory or abandoning it.

Frau von La Roche had married her eldest daughter to a merchant in Frankfort, and though she often came to visit her, she could not get used to a situation which she had herself brought about. Instead

of feeling at home, or trying to bring about a change, she gave way to laments, so that one was really compelled to think that her daughter was unhappy, although, since she wanted for nothing and her husband did not deny her anything, it was difficult to see in what her unhappiness consisted. I was well received in the house and came into touch with the whole circle, which consisted partly of people who had helped to bring about the marriage, partly of people who wished it success. . . . I found myself suddenly at home in a strange circle in whose occupations, amusements, even religious services I was induced, indeed compelled, to take part. My former relations with the young wife, which were really of a brotherly nature, were continued after her marriage. We were matched in age, and I was the only one in the whole circle in whom she found a reminder of that intellectual atmosphere to which she had been accustomed since youth. We continued to live on a footing of childlike intimacy, and, although there was nothing of a passionate nature in our intercourse, yet it was painful enough since she could not get on in her new environment either. Although well endowed with worldly goods, she had been transferred from the cheerful vale of Ehrenbreitstein and a happy youth to a gloomily situated business house, and had to conduct herself as the mother of a number of stepchildren. It was in such novel social conditions that I found myself cramped, without any real participation or collaboration. This was only natural when the members of the family got on well together; but most of them turned to me when things became difficult, and my active interest used to make them worse instead of better. It was not long before the situation became quite intolerable; all the weariness with life which usually springs from such unsatisfactory relations seemed to weigh doubly and trebly upon me, and a new and forcible resolve was necessary to give me my freedom.

The death of Jerusalem, which had been caused by an unhappy love for the wife of a friend, shook me out of my dream, and, since I not only saw clearly what had happened to him and to me, but the similarity of my own experience at the moment, also aroused in me a passionate activity, I could not fail to breathe into the work which I then undertook all the ardour which prevents any distinction between the poetic and the real. I had completely isolated myself from the outside world, I had even asked my friends not to visit me, and so I also inwardly laid aside everything which did not belong directly to the matter in hand. On the other hand I collected everything that had any bearing on my purpose, and I recapitulated my immediate experiences, of which I had not yet made any poetic use. It was in such circumstances, after such protracted and secret preparations, that I wrote *Werther* in four weeks, without a plan of the whole work or the treatment of any portion of it having previously been put to paper.

The completed manuscript lay before me in draft with only a few

corrections and alterations. I had it stitched together immediately, for a binding performs the same service for a manuscript as a frame does for a picture—it is easier to see whether it will stand the test of an independent existence. Since I had composed the work more or less unconsciously, like a somnambulist, I was myself surprised when I went through it to make emendations or improvements. Expecting, however, that after a time, when I was able to look at it from a certain distance, many things would occur to me which would be to its advantage, I gave it to my younger friends to read, but the effect it had on them was all the greater since, contrary to my usual custom, I had not previously told anyone about it or revealed my purpose. To be sure, it was the theme which really produced the effect in this case also, and therefore their mood was the antithesis of my own, for I had, in composing this work, rescued myself more successfully than by any of my other writings from a turbulent element on which I had been most violently tossed about through my own fault and that of others, through a manner of living which was partly accidental, partly of my own choice, through design and rashness, through obstinacy and weakness. I again felt free and cheerful, as though after a general confession, and justified in entering upon a new life. My old remedy had served me excellently well this time. But just as I felt eased and clearer in mind at having transformed reality into poetry, my friends became bewildered since they thought that they must transform poetry into reality, imitate a novel like this in real life and, in any case, shoot themselves; and what occurred at first among a few took place later among the general public, so that this book, which had done me so much good, was condemned as being highly dangerous. . . .

The effect of the little book was very great, immense indeed, chiefly because it came at the right time. For since only a slight quantity of powder is required to blow up a powerful mine, the explosion which took place among the public was so violent because the young generation had already undermined itself, and the convulsion was so great because every one burst forth with his exaggerated claims, unsatisfied passions, and imaginary sufferings. One cannot demand of the public that it should accept an intellectual work intellectually. It was really only the content, the theme that was noticed, as I had already discovered among my friends, and, moreover, the old prejudice, arising from the prestige of the printed word, again emerged, namely that a book must have a didactic purpose. True representation, however, has none. It neither approves nor blames, but only develops thoughts and actions in due sequence and, by this means, enlightens and instructs. . . .

I was prepared for everything that might be alleged against *Werther*, and so I found such opposition by no means disagreeable, but I had not expected to be subjected to insufferable anguish by benevolent and sympathetic friends, for, instead of anyone complimenting me on my

book as it was, they all demanded to know, once for all, how much truth there was in it. I was very annoyed and my replies were mostly exceedingly rude. In order to answer this question I should have had to pluck to pieces again the work which had caused me so much thought in giving poetic unity to so many different elements, and I should have destroyed the form, thereby if not demolishing, at least dispersing the real constituent parts. Thinking it over I could not blame the public for their demand. The fate of Jerusalem had created a great stir. An educated, charming, irreproachable young man, the son of one of our most celebrated theologians, healthy and well-to-do, suddenly quitted the world without any known cause. Every one asked how it had been possible, and when his unhappy love affair was revealed the whole of the younger generation was agitated, while when certain small vexations were discussed which he had met with in aristocratic society, the whole of the middle classes was roused, and every one wanted to hear the details. Now there appeared in *Werther* a circumstantial description in which it was thought that the life and character of this youth were to be discovered. The locality and the personality tallied, and, as the style of the narrative was very realistic, the public believed themselves to be in complete possession of the facts and were satisfied. On closer examination, however, there were many things that did not fit in, and those who sought the truth found their work unprofitable, for a critical analysis must necessarily produce a hundred difficulties. It was not possible to get to the bottom of the matter, for what I had put in the book of my experiences and suffering could not be deciphered, since, as an obscure young man, I had led, if not a secluded, at least a quiet life.

In the course of my work it had not been unknown to me how very favoured that artist had been who was given the opportunity to form his Venus from a study of several beauties, and so I permitted myself also to fashion my Charlotte out of the shape and qualities of several beautiful children, though the principal features were taken from the one I loved most. The inquiring public was therefore able to discover resemblances to different women, and it was not a matter of indifference to the ladies either, which of them was held to be the original. The several Charlottes, however, caused me infinite pain, for every one who only looked at me wanted to know where the real one lived. Like Nathan with the three rings, I tried to find a way out which may, to be sure, be suitable for higher beings but which satisfies neither the believing nor the reading public. I hoped to be rid after a time of these painful inquiries, but they accompanied me throughout my whole life. I tried to escape by travelling about incognito, but even this expedient was unexpectedly frustrated, and so, if the author of the little book did any harm or injustice, he was sufficiently, indeed exces-

sively, punished by the subsequent unavoidable importunities to which he was subjected.

Attacked in this way, he only too soon became aware that author and public are separated by a vast gulf, of which neither, happily, has any idea. How useless this renders all prefaces he had realized long since; for the more one tries to make one's purpose clear, the greater is the cause of confusion. And an author can write as long an introduction as he likes, the public will continue to make the demands on him which he has already tried to avert. I likewise soon became acquainted with an analogous peculiarity of the reader, the effect of which, particularly in the case of those who print their opinions, is quite comic. They labour, namely, under the delusion that any work an author produces puts him in their debt, that it is always far behind what they really wanted, although before they had seen the work they had had no conception that such a thing existed or was even possible. All this apart, my greatest fortune or misfortune was that every one wanted to know something about this strange young author, who had emerged so boldly and unexpectedly. They wanted to see him, to speak with him, even at a distance they wanted to hear something about him, and so he was soon surrounded by an exceedingly important, sometimes pleasant, sometimes disagreeable, but always distracting crowd. For there were on his desk plenty of unfinished works, and he would have had enough to do for a few years had he been able to concentrate on them with his old enthusiasm. He had, however, been drawn out of the tranquillity, the dusk, the obscurity which alone favour pure production, into the bluster of day, where one loses oneself in others, where one is confused by sympathy as well as by coldness, by praise as well as by blame, since these external contacts never coincide with the periods of our inward culture and, as they cannot help us, must therefore necessarily do us harm.

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FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

Schiller was born at Marbach on the Neckar in 1759. In 1781 he was appointed a surgeon to a Würtemberg regiment, but he sedulously developed his poetic gift and in 1782 his play *Die Räuber*, which he had composed at the age of seventeen, was produced at Mannheim. In 1788 he was made Professor of History at the University of Jena, but his health failed. In 1799 he settled in Weimar and assisted Goethe in his efforts to improve the German theatre. Among his plays are the trilogy, *Wallenstein*, *Maria Stuart*, *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, and *Die Braut von Messina*. He also wrote ballads, didactic poems, and many lyrics, as well as philosophy, history, and criticism. He died in 1805.

The present essay has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF VULGAR AND BASE ELEMENTS IN ART

EVERYTHING is vulgar which does not speak to the mind, and arouses only a sensual interest. There are, to be sure, a thousand things which are vulgar on account of their theme or content; but since the vulgarity of the theme can be ennobled by the treatment, we speak in Art only of vulgarity of form. A vulgar mind will profane the noblest theme by vulgar treatment; a great mind and a noble spirit, on the other hand, will be able to ennoble even the vulgar by attaching it to something spiritual and discovering a noble aspect. Thus an historian of vulgar stamp will describe the unimportant doings of his hero with the same care he would bestow on his most exalted achievements, and will dwell just as long on his family tree, his costume, or his household as on his schemes and enterprises. He will relate his most important actions in such a way that no one can see their real significance. On the other hand, an historian of intellect and nobility of soul will provide even the private life and most insignificant actions of his hero with an interest and content which give them significance. A vulgar taste is displayed by the Dutch painters, great and noble taste by the Italians, but even more by the Greeks. The latter always aimed at the ideal, rejected every vulgar feature, and refrained from choosing vulgar themes.

A portrait painter can treat his subject in a *vulgar* way or in a *great* way. Vulgar, when he depicts the incidental as carefully as the essential, when he neglects what is great and carefully reproduces what is petty; great, when he knows how to seek out the most interesting features, divorces the incidental from the essential, only just indicates that which is petty but reproduces that which is great. Nothing, however, is great except the expression of the soul in actions, gestures, and attitudes.

An author treats his theme in a vulgar way when he relates unimportant actions and touches fleetingly on important ones, and in a great way when he connects it with what is great. Homer knew how to describe the shield of Achilles in a brilliant manner, though the manufacture of a shield is, as a theme, something very ordinary.

The *base* is a degree lower than the vulgar, from which it is distinguished by the fact that it is not merely something *negative,* not merely a lack of cleverness and nobility, but is a proof of something *positive,* namely coarseness of feeling, bad morals, and contemptible sentiments.

The vulgar merely testifies to the fact that a desirable merit is lacking, the base to the fact that a quality is lacking which everybody should be expected to possess. For example, revenge, in whatever circumstances and whatever form, is in itself vulgar, because it proves a lack of generosity; but we distinguish, nevertheless, a revenge which is *base,* when the avenger employs contemptible means to gratify it. Baseness always signifies something coarse and plebeian, but even a person of birth and good manners can think and act in a vulgar way if his talents are inferior. A man acts in a *vulgar* way when he is only intent on his own advantage, and in this respect he is a contrast to the *noble* man who can be oblivious of his own advantage in order to afford pleasure to another. The same man, however, would be acting basely if he pursued profit at the cost of honour and did not even respect the laws of decency. The vulgar is therefore opposed to the noble, the base is opposed to both the noble and the decent. To yield without resistance to every passion, to gratify every instinct, without even submitting to the restraint of the laws of well-being, much less to those of morality, is base and betrays a base soul.

Even in works of art one can lapse into baseness, not only by choosing base themes, which a sense of decency and propriety would exclude, but also by *treating them in a base way.* A theme is treated in a base way either when that aspect is emphasized which decency demands should be kept in the background, or when it is expressed in a way which leads incidentally to base ideas. Base actions occur in the lives of the greatest of men, but it is only a base taste which will emphasize them or describe them in detail.

There are paintings depicting scenes in sacred history where the apostles, the Virgin, and even Christ himself have an expression as though they had been chosen from the lowest of the low. All such treatment testifies to a base taste, and gives us the right to conclude that the artist's mind is coarse and plebeian.

There are, it is true, cases where base elements are admissible in Art; that is to say, where it is intended to arouse laughter. Even a person of fine manners can at times, without displaying a corrupt taste, find amusement in the coarse but faithful expression of Nature and in the contrast between the manners of the refined world and the rabble. The intoxication of a person of rank would, in any circumstances, excite displeasure; but a drunken postillion, sailor, or coster makes us laugh. Jests, which in a man of breeding would be intolerable, amuse us in the mouths of the rabble. Many of the scenes in the plays of Aristophanes are of this kind, but they sometimes overstep this limit and are simply reprehensible. That is why we find delight in parodies, where the thoughts, habits of speech, and actions of the common people are attributed to the same superior personages whom the author has

treated in a dignified and respectful way. As soon as the author aims merely at exciting laughter and desires only to amuse us, then base elements are admissible, except that he must never arouse annoyance or disgust.

He inspires annoyance when he employs base elements in a situation where it is simply unpardonable, that is to say in the case of characters from whom we are entitled to expect more refined manners. If he acts against this precept, it is either an offence against truth, since we would rather regard him as a liar than believe that persons of breeding can really act so basely, or his characters offend our moral feeling and, what is even worse, excite our indignation. In the case of farce it is quite different, for then there is a tacit agreement between the author and his audience that truth is not to be expected. In a farce we dispense the author from the necessity of depicting real life, and he is given, so to speak, the right to deceive us. For here it is on the contrast with truth that the comic effect is based, and it cannot at the same time both contrast with truth and be true.

Even in serious and tragic situations, however, there are rare cases where base elements can be employed, though their effect must then be to introduce the *terrible,* and the momentary offence against good taste must be effaced by a powerful engaging of the emotions, and thus, so to speak, be swallowed up by a higher tragic effect. *Stealing,* for instance, is something *entirely base,* and whatever our heart may advance to excuse the thief, however much he may have been led astray by the force of circumstance, he is yet branded with an inextinguishable stigma, and from the *aesthetic* point of view he will always remain a base subject. Good taste is here less able to pardon than good morals, and its judgment is more severe, because an aesthetic subject is responsible for all the incidental ideas which it arouses in us, while moral judgment ignores the incidentals. A thief would therefore be an extremely unsuitable subject for any serious poetic representation. If, however, he is at the same time a murderer, he is, to be sure, *morally* even more reprehensible, but from the *aesthetic* point of view he becomes a degree more suitable. A character who degrades himself by an *infamous* act (I am still speaking only of aesthetic criticism) can again be to some extent elevated and reinstated in our aesthetic esteem by committing a crime. This divergence between moral and aesthetic judgment is remarkable and deserves to be considered. There are many reasons for it. In the first place, as I have already pointed out, aesthetic judgment depends on the imagination and is therefore influenced by all the incidental ideas which are aroused in us by a theme and stand in a natural relationship to it. If these are of a base order, they inevitably degrade the main theme.

Secondly, in aesthetic judgment we lay stress on *strength,* in moral

judgment on *lawfulness*. Lack of strength is something contemptible, and every action which leads us to deduce it is likewise contemptible. Every cowardly or cringing deed is repellent on account of the lack of strength it betrays, while a diabolic deed, on the contrary, can be aesthetically pleasing if it only betrays strength. A theft displays a cringing, cowardly disposition; a murder has at least the appearance of strength, or at least the degree of aesthetic interest we take in it is measurable according to the degree of strength displayed.

Thirdly, in the case of a serious and dreadful crime, our attention is distracted from its quality and drawn to its terrible *consequences*. The weaker emotion is then suppressed by the stronger. We do not look backward into the soul of the culprit, but forward at his destiny, the consequences of his deed. As soon, however, as we begin to *tremble*, all delicacy of taste is silent. Our soul is completely occupied by the principal impression, and the incidental, secondary ideas, with which the base element is really connected, are effaced. Therefore the theft of young Ruhberg in the play *A Criminal Through Ambition* is not repellent on the stage, but is truly tragic. With much skill the author has so ordered the circumstances that we are carried away breathlessly. The dreadful misery of his family, and especially the grief of his father, are themes that distract our attention from the culprit and focus it on the consequences of his act. We are too much under the influence of emotion to engage in thoughts of the disgrace with which the theft is stigmatized. In short, the base aspect is hidden by the terrible. It is strange that this actual theft by young Ruhberg is not so repugnant to us as the merely unfounded suspicion of theft in another play, where a young officer is unjustly accused of having pocketed a silver spoon that is afterward found elsewhere. The baseness is here merely imaginary, mere suspicion and yet, in our aesthetic judgment, the innocent hero of the piece is irreparably damaged. The reason for this is that the idea that a person can act basely presupposes a not very firm opinion as to his morals, since the laws of propriety make it necessary to assume that a man is honourable until the contrary is discovered. If therefore a contemptible action is attributed to him, it looks as though he had after all at some time or other given cause for the possibility of such a suspicion, although the baseness of an unmerited suspicion is really to the discredit of the accuser. The hero of the above-mentioned play is even more damaged by the fact that he is an officer and the lover of a lady of rank and breeding, and with these two qualities the quality of stealing is in startling contrast. It is impossible for us, when he is with the lady, not to remember immediately that he might be carrying the silver spoon in his pocket. The greatest misfortune, however, is that he has no inkling of the suspicion resting on him, for in that case he would, as an officer,

demand bloody satisfaction, and the consequences would then become terrible so that the baseness would disappear.

Baseness of disposition must be distinguished from baseness of action and circumstance. The former is beneath all aesthetic merit, but the latter is often quite compatible with it. Slavery is base, but a servile disposition in freedom is contemptible, while a servile occupation without a servile disposition, on the other hand, is not. Much rather can baseness of circumstance, combined with nobility of disposition, become transformed into sublimity. The master of Epictetus, who beat him, was acting basely, and the beaten slave manifested sublimity of soul. True greatness only shines forth all the more brightly from a base destiny, and the artist should not be afraid of displaying his hero even in contemptible guise, if only he is sure that he is able to give expression to greatness of soul.

What is permitted to the author, however, is not always permissible to the painter. The former only brings his objects before the imagination, while the latter brings them directly before the senses. So not only is the impression made by a painting more vivid than that made by a poem, but the painter cannot, by means of his natural symbols, render the inward spirit as visible as the poet can with his voluntary symbols, and yet it is only the inward spirit that can reconcile us with the outward manifestation. When Homer depicts Ulysses in beggar's rags, it is our own concern how far we elaborate this picture and how long we tarry with it. But in no case is it sufficiently vivid to be either unpleasant or repugnant. If, however, a painter, or even more an actor, faithfully copied the appearance of Ulysses as depicted by Homer, we would turn away in disgust. Here the vividness of the impression is not under our control: we *must* see what the painter shows, and cannot so easily dismiss the repugnant incidental ideas which are called to mind.

* * *

JEAN PAUL FRIEDRICH RICHTER

RICHTER, who wrote as "Jean Paul," was born in Bavaria in 1763 and studied theology at Leipzig. He soon forsook theology for literature, but the necessity of earning a living drove him to teach and his leisure was occupied in producing such books as *Extracts from the Devil's Papers; Flower, Fruit, and Thorn Pieces;* and *My Prospective Autobiography*. The romance, *Hesperus*, brought him fame and after that Jean Paul was idolized in Germany. He used his humour to castigate all manner of follies, great and little, taking in every aspect of human life. He died in 1825.

The present essay is taken from *Siebenkäs*, and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

ADAM'S ADDRESS TO EVE AFTER THE FALL

WE, MAIDEN, are, to be sure, the first parents and are resolved to beget all the other parents; but if all you can do is to dip your spoon into forbidden apple sauce, it is very thoughtless of you. I, as man and protoplast, am reflecting, and as I walk to and fro I will preach the marriage sermon—I wish I had begotten a preacher for the purpose—on the occasion of our holy act. In a short wedding address I will submit to you and to myself the hesitations and the motives, the *rationes dubitandi* and *decidendi,* of the protoplasts—or the first wedded and parental couple (namely, you and me) engaged in reflection and observation—in connexion with

First, the causes and arguments why we should not propagate our seed, but should this very day wander forth, one to the old world, the other to the new, and

Secondly, the reasons why we should nevertheless stay here and wed—in which case there must be a short *elenchus* or *usus epanorthoticus* to conclude the night.

Argument the First

Attentive listener! though you see me here dressed in a sheepskin, grave, thoughtful, and proper, yet I am full not so much of foolishness as of—fools, interspersed with many a sage. I am, to be sure, short of stature, and when we left Eden the ocean came pretty well up to my ankles and splashed my new sheepskin, but, by Heaven, I walk about girt with a seed-bag that contains the seed of all the nations, and I carry in front the stock and capital of the whole human race, a world in little and an *orbem pictum,* as pedlars carry their store of goods openly on their stomachs. For Bonnet, who is also in my stomach, will, when he emerges, sit down at his desk and explain how everything is inside everything else, one box and parenthesis inside the other, the son inside the father and both in the grandfather; and consequently the grandfather, together with his contents, is sitting and waiting inside the great-grandfather; and the great-grandfather, together with the contents of his contents and all his incidentals, inside the great-great-grandfather. Are there not then incorporated here in your bridegroom all the religious sects and (we must of course except the pre-Adamites), even the Adamites and all the giants, all the shiploads of negroes destined for America and the packet with a red mark on it containing the soldiers from Anspach and Baireuth who are to be sold to the English? Am I not, Eve, as I stand before you and display my inside, a living Ghetto, a Louvre of all the crowned heads, whom I can beget if I wish

and am not dissuaded by my first argument? You will admire and yet laugh at me when you regard me carefully and put your hand on my shoulder, and think that here in this man and protoplast there dwell without wrangling all the faculties, all the schools of philosophy, and all the spinning and sewing schools, the oldest and most distinguished of the princely houses (though these are not yet picked out of the common herd and purified), the whole free order of imperial knighthood, (though still packed in with their peasant tenants and cottagers), convents mixed up with monasteries, all the barracks and parliaments, to say nothing of the deans and chapters of all the cathedrals. "What a man!" you will add, "What an Anak!" You are right, my dear, that's what I am, the veritable lucky penny in the human coin cabinet, the court of courts, with its full complement of members, the living *corpus juris* of all the civilians, canon lawyers, criminologists, and publicists. Are there not inside me the *Learned Germany* of Meusel and the *Scholar's Lexicon* of Jöcher, and Meusel and Jöcher themselves, to say nothing of the supplementary volumes? I wish I could show you Cain. If I am persuaded by the second argument, he will become our first vine-stock and tendril, our Prince of Wales, of Calabria, the Asturias, and Brazil. If he were transparent—which I think he is—I could show you how everything is fitted inside him like beer glasses, all the ecumenical councils and inquisitions and propagandas, and the Devil himself together with his grandmother. But, my beauteous one, you did not write down before your fall any of your *scientia media,* as I did, and you therefore gaze with blind eyes into the future. I alone, who can see into it quite clearly, am aware that I would beget not ten fools, as another person might, but billions of tens and the ones as well, since it is I who will give life to all the inhabitants of Bohemia, Paris, Vienna, Leipzig, Baireuth, Dublin, London, and Kuhschnappel (to say nothing of their wives and daughters), among whom there will always be more than five hundred in every million who will not listen to reason and yet do not possess any themselves. You have little knowledge of human beings—you only know two in fact, for the serpent isn't a human being; but I know what I am going to produce, and that with my *limbus infantum* I shall start a Bedlam. By Heaven! I tremble and lament when I turn over the records of the centuries and merely peep into the pages; I see nothing but bloodstains and motley crowds of fools. When I count the trouble that will be taken before a century even learns to write a legible hand, as good as that of an elephant's trunk or of a minister—until poor humanity has passed the dame school and French governess stage, so that it can be honourably promoted to grammar schools or Jesuit colleges, until it can even take fencing, dancing, and drawing lessons and can attend a *dogmaticum* or a *clinicum.* Deuce take it! It makes me feel uneasy. Nobody, to be sure, will call you the brood hen of

the future flock of starlings, the female cod in which Leuwenhök reckons there are nine and a half million eggs. You won't be blamed, Evie, but people will say that your husband ought to have had more sense and have begotten nothing rather than such a rabble; most of them are robbers—crowned emperors on the Roman throne and viceroys in the papal seat, of whom the former will take their title from Antoninus and Cæsar, and the latter from Christ and Peter, and among whom there are rulers whose throne will be a torture chair for humanity and an accoucheur's chair for the Devil, if it does not become an inverted Place de Grève which serves at the same time for the execution of the masses and the amusement of individuals instead of the execution of individuals and the amusement of the masses. I shall also be blamed for Borgia, Pizarro, Saint Dominic, and Potemkin. And even supposing I can refute the blame for these black exceptions, I shall still have to admit that my descendants and colonists cannot exist half an hour without thinking of or committing some piece of folly; that the giants' war of the instincts prevents the maintenance of peace in them and rarely permits an armistice; that the chief fault of man is that he has so many small ones; that practically the only use of his conscience is to make him hate his neighbour and be morbidly sensitive to the transgressions of others; that he will only cast off his bad habits on his death-bed to which a confession stool is brought, just as children are taken to stool before they are taken to bed; that he learns and loves the language of virtue and bears ill-will to the virtuous, just as the Londoners engage a French tutor and yet dislike the French.—Eve, Eve, it is sorry credit that we shall be storing up by our marriage! "Adam" means, in the original text, "red earth," and in truth my cheeks will entirely consist of it and grow red whenever I think of the inexpressible and incessant vanity and conceit of our descendants, which will swell with the centuries. Not one of them will pull at his own nose [1] except when he is shaving. The aristocracy will have their coats of arms burned into the ceilings of their privy chambers and entwine the cruppers of their horses in their monograms. The reviewers will think themselves better than the authors and the authors will think themselves better than the reviewers, the ladies will offer their hands to be kissed by everybody and people in high places will offer the hem of their embroidered robes. I had only carried my prophetic extracts from the history of the world as far as the sixth millennium when you took that bite at the apple, Eve, and I in my simplicity took a bite after you and lost the rest. God knows what the blockheads, male and female, will look like in the subsequent centuries. Maiden! will you now employ your *sternocleidomastoideum,* in other words, will you nod your head and thereby answer in the affirma-

[1] German idiom for "mind his own business."

tive when I put to you the question—"Will you accept this wedding sermonizer for your lawful husband?"

You will no doubt reply that we should at least hear the second argument, in which the matter is considered from the other side. And, in truth, I had almost forgotten to proceed to

Argument the Second,

and to consider the grounds which might induce the protoplasts or first parents to earn that title, to unite in marriage, to act as the sowing machine of Fate, to spin the linen and hemp, the flax and tow, with which it winds a vast network and drag-net round the globe. My chief inducement—and yours too, I hope—is the Day of Judgment. For if we both become the *entrepreneurs* of the human race, I shall see all my descendants, who on the last day will rise up from the calcined earth, assemble on the neighbouring planets for the final review; and among this crowd of children and grandchildren I shall meet people who possess intelligence and whom one can speak to. Men whose lives were passed in storms and were lost in one, just as the favourites of the gods, according to the Roman belief, are slain by thunder, and who yet never covered up their eyes or their ears when a tempest was raging. And further there will be present, I see, the four splendid heathen apostles, Socrates, Cato, Epictetus, and Antoninus, who with their voices, as though they had screwed on to their throats 200-foot-long fire-hoses, went about in all the houses to preserve them from every fatal conflagration of the passions, extinguishing it with the best and purest mountain water. I shall be the original papa and you will be the original mamma of the most excellent individuals, if we care to. I tell you, Eve, I have it here in my excerpts and collectanea that I shall be the progenitor, ancestor, Bethlehem, and formative essence of an Aristotle, a Plato, a Shakespeare, a Newton, a Rousseau, a Goethe, a Kant, and a Leibnitz—all people who will think more wisely than their protoplast himself. Eve! actual and esteemed member of the now established Fructiferous Society, of the producing class in the present state, consisting of yourself and the orator, I swear to you that I shall enjoy an hour filled with a number of blissful eternities when I hastily scan the group of classics among the resurrected on the neighbouring planet and fall at last on my knees with rapture and say "Good morning, my children!" The Jews used to offer up short, fervent prayers when they met a wise man, but what prayer can I offer up that shall be long enough when I see all the wise men and scholars together, and blood relations of mine who, in spite of the wolfish appetite of their instincts, were able to abstain from the forbidden apples and pears and pineapples, and who, in spite of their thirst for truth, did not steal from the tree of knowledge, while their

first parents grasped the forbidden fruit, even though they were not hungry, and although they already possessed all knowledge except that of the nature of the serpent.

* * *

LUDWIG BÖRNE

BÖRNE was born at Frankfurt in 1786. He studied first medicine and then law, finally returning to his native town to edit various journals in active opposition to the government, and becoming Heine's rival in the leadership of the party known as "Young Germany." He settled in Paris in 1832 and died there in 1837. From his place of exile he bitterly satirized German follies and incited the people to rebellion, so that he has been termed "the nightmare of the German princes." Among his writings are his *Briefe aus Paris* and *Neue Briefe aus Paris*.

The following essays have been specially translated for this volume by Dr. William Rose.

I. ON THE SULKING OF WOMEN

AS IS the custom with all civilized peoples, I used to call my *fiancée* an angel; now I call my wife a fallen angel when I am annoyed with her, and an angel with clipped wings when the matrimonial horizon is unclouded. "Why clipped wings?" Wilhelmine asked when I first used this expression. I was somewhat embarrassed, for I had not yet learned to dissemble. I did not yet know how helpful prevarication often is in married life, and that tears can be made to flow less frequently if a shade is held before the irritating glare of truth. "My dear Wilhelmine," I said, putting a piece of sugar, which she is very fond of, between her red lips, "my sweet one, would I not need to tremble for my happiness if your wings were not clipped? Would I not be in continual fear that you would fly away?" I was about to add, with poetic inspiration, "up to Heaven, which is your home," but she would not let me continue. "Oh! so you are afraid I might be unfaithful to you?" she asked. She refused to listen to my reply, assumed a straight face, closed her lips, and *sulked*. My entreaties, my threats, my expostulations, even my silence—all were in vain. She continued to sulk. I strode heavily up and down the room. My features expressed all the emotions in turn—love, hate, anger, rage, despair. My Wilhelmine remained obstinately silent. It was then that I discovered how women sulk, and I never forgot that notorious capacity of the female sex. I had been married just a month when the sun of my happiness entered the zodiacal sign of Cancer. At first Wilhelmine only had a sulking chair, then she took possession of a

sulking corner, later she retired to a sulking chamber, until finally, by dint of much practice, she was able to sulk anywhere in the house.

I have dabbled in both the theoretical and practical philosophies, and am not altogether unacquainted with metaphysics, logic, anthropology, and empiric psychology, but I have not yet come to grips with the theory of female sulking. Nevertheless I will willingly communicate the few indisputable principles which I have deduced from my experiences, for they may, in the present state of Europe, perhaps not be entirely without profit.

The sulking of women is nothing but guerilla warfare, waged against the concentrated power of man; warfare in which they always win. What is the good of your heavy artillery when the hands which apply the match are stung and confused by one midge after another? Of what avail are your arguments though they have three times a hundred thousand points? Women are proof against them, as though they had concluded an alliance with the Evil One himself, and none can penetrate their armour. Their most dangerous weapon is their tongue, whether they use it for speech or silence. When they speak you can, if your common sense and your patience are both considerable, reduce them sometimes to silence; but if they are silent (which, in domestic warfare, is called sulking) then all your efforts to make them speak will be useless; you will be compelled to retire and to conclude an armistice on any terms.

When a man is angry his head is at least above the clouds of his wrath, and the domestic storm rumbles only at his feet; but a woman stands with her head beneath the crashing welkin and not a single ray of peace illumines her sombre countenance. When I quarrel with my Wilhelmine, I know that I shall be reconciled in a quarter of an hour, but my sulking angel imagines that she will never be able to make it up again. A ridiculous misunderstanding usually helps to provoke her even more, for whereas I usually call her Wilhelmine, I always call her *Minchen* when she is in a temper. This only makes her more implacable, for she thinks I use the affectionate diminutive only to mock her, and she gathers from the war bulletins in the newspapers that I only call her *Minchen* when she is sulky because then she resembles a small *mine*. So you can see how skilfully she knows how to wage a guerilla war.

I have often suggested to my wife that I should take out a monthly subscription for her sulking, that is, that I should always admit, thirty days in advance, that she is in the right. But she would not hear of such a contract, so I have to enter many gloomy sulking-days in my domestic almanac, and at the end of the year the meteorological balance is not always to my advantage. What gives my almanac, however, an even stranger and more melancholy appearance is that though I am able to put down the day and hour when my Wilhelmine begins to sulk,

I cannot determine either the hour or the day when she leaves off. She de-sulks, so to speak, so gradually and imperceptibly that it is impossible to say when the last tone of discontent died away, and I suddenly find myself restored to my accustomed happy state without knowing how I arrived there. She once confided to me that that is how every woman acts, because when her heart has run down and she is winding it up again, she has to let all the hours, half-hours, and quarters finish striking until the hand once more indicates the hour of love, otherwise her spiritual clock might suffer some damage.

If my Wilhelmine sulks me out of the Paradise, that she has herself created for me, for hours or days at a time, I have only myself to blame, for I have unthinkingly retained in my domestic constitution the same defect that is manifest in that of Spain. My wife and I form one chamber, and so what happens in similar cases is bound to happen with us—the democratic principle gains the mastery over the aristocratic idea. The heart of woman is an Athenian market—lovely posies, fragrant fruits, beauty, wit, and sensibility all spread beneath a glorious blue sky, but also caprice, inconstancy, ingratitude, and spite. When, however, domestic legislation has been wisely divided into *two* chambers, where the husband represents the Upper House and the wife the Lower, then, in the incomparable words of a noble Bavarian poet, the democratic waves will break against the rocks of aristocracy, on which is built the throne of peace.

II. IN DEFENCE OF THE JEWS

IN DEFENCE, I should say, of liberty and justice, though, if people understood that, there would be no need to discuss the matter.

Since they have no centre of gravity of the intellect, which we call justice, or of the heart, which we call love, they stumble and fall at every movement which they make, every step leads them farther from the goal, every experience renders them more hesitating, every phenomenon is strange to them, and every morning they awake new-born. Since they do not understand the structure of mankind, they regard it merely as an accumulation of individuals, and since they do not understand the structure of the state, this appears to them only as a mass of diverse pretensions and desires, all striving in hostility for predominance. That is why the mind of poor humanity is confused by so many different things, and the providence is almost too cruel which loads the penance for centuries of guilt upon a single race.

Our Fatherland lies sick, and must be healed, but so great is the confusion among those in power that we could wish they were all malevolent, since it is the well-meaning ones who do most harm. The former regard an evil with an eye of malice, and often do no worse than

leave its further course to Nature. But the latter, sympathetic, eager to help, and ignorant, practise active intervention. Since all the limbs of the body are affected, they employ for each limb and for each pain a particular remedy. They are so foolish as to apply a plaster to the feverish pulse, in order to calm it, as though there lay the root of the evil. Or am I wrong? Do you really understand the working of the national life-force, and ought I not first to apologize for *descending* (as you will say) from such far-reaching principles to a consideration of the position of the Jews? I do not speak of those who hate that unlucky race, but of those who are fair, those who are indifferent. This anti-Semitism, they may think, is a trifling matter that does not concern the Fatherland. It is true that an ugly-marked face may appear to young girls only as something that does not entice to kisses—but physicians should realize that it is evidence of malignant humours.

If we speak of the irreconcilable hatred that has pursued the Jews for eighteen centuries, we must speak not of what has happened in the past, but of what is happening now and of what is to happen in the future. What has been done was engendered by necessity; freedom only exists in what is to be done. We cannot judge the guilt of human nature, but only the guilt of men, and an error that has been maintained for nearly two thousand years is above all blame. But when the contemplative mind hovers calm and exalted above the fogs and raging waters, above passion and the confusion of circumstance, balancing every sin and every error, then the ordinary, ruthless, frenzied man need seek no justification up there for his acts. For just as the earth revolves on its axis, as it pursues its course round the sun, so has man also a double motion, a general and a special one. The former, which is his fate, draws him irresistibly onward; the latter, which is his freedom, is determined by his own will.

It is difficult to comprehend in what the ill-starred destiny of the Jews consists, for it has not yet completed its course, and it is only in the death of things that the significance of their life is revealed. It appears to spring from an obscure, inexplicable horror which Judaism inspires, and which, like a mocking, threatening ghost, the spirit of a murdered mother, has haunted Christendom from its cradle.

Let us, however, descend among the unfettered actions of mankind, deep down to the quagmire where lives the hideous, venomous brood of snakes, emitting malignant vapours, poisoning the existence of so many innocent generations and cheating them of their life's reward.

In former days, Jews and heretics were burned in the name of a fanatic faith, but since this was inhuman it cannot be judged in a human way. Murder was followed by robbery, for the fat of the sacrifice was always the reward for the services of the priests. But nowadays, when even the most ruthless hypocrite would not venture to suggest that the Jews are persecuted on account of their religion,

what is the excuse for malice? It used to be thought that the Jews would not enter Heaven, and that was the reason for not tolerating them here; but now, when Heaven is not denied them, whence comes the persistence of the desire to wipe them off the face of the earth?

The Jews are attacked with the most shameless hypocrisy; lying assertions are made against them with such impudence that even those who are not ill-inclined toward them are deluded, since they are unable to believe themselves the victims of such blunt deception. I will therefore unmask the fools and allow the light to shine upon the faces of the miscreants. They will bluster and flutter like scared owls. The sage serfs who rule us will say that the minds of the people must not be excited by speeches. They think that if everything is allowed to remain obscure, the opposing forces will not see each other and will be compelled to keep the peace. It is better, however, that the night should be illumined by the torch of truth rather than by the torch of incendiarism. Truth does indeed provoke, but it does not embitter. The feeling of shame is painful, but it leads the guilty to repentance, and not to the repetition of their offence. The enlightened nation will come to realize that its evil actions were not even to its own advantage, that it has, on the contrary, to hand over its ill-gotten gains to a few insatiable aristocrats. It will learn to understand that it was seduced into abusing its freedom, in order that it might be possible to say it was unworthy of its freedom, and that it was appointed gaoler of the Jews since the gaoler, like the prisoner, is not allowed to leave the prison. That one door more or less blocks the exit—that is the only difference; but neither is free.

In the last decade that preceded the French Revolution, certain German scholars versed in political science drafted more humane and rational principles for legislation in general, including the civil state of the Jews, and the first thing the French did when they overthrew the government was to introduce these principles into practice. In Westphalia, in the Grand Duchy of Frankfort, and in other German states where the French form of government prevailed under the domination of Napoleon, the Jews were allowed by the constitution equal rights with the other citizens, and these were introduced without resistance, or even complaint, on the part of the people. Then Napoleon fell and Germany was free. Immediately there arose in Northern Germany some writers who declaimed against the Jews, and the free towns, especially Frankfort, which had not yet awakened from its medieval sleep, once more drew the old Jewish law, or rather their former outlawed state, from beneath the dust of the archives. What were the sources of this reaction?

Among the Germans, who attributed all the tyranny from which they suffered to Napoleon, the urge to freedom and hatred of the French

were fused into one emotion. And as one misjudges or despises even the good which comes from one's enemies, so were the benefits misjudged and despised which French legislation had conferred on Germany. After the expulsion of the French the civil liberty of the Jews, which the former had established, was looked upon in places as something pernicious. The Jews were also thought to have been friendly to the French occupation, because, though they had found it no less oppressive than had the other Germans, they had been the only ones to find some compensation for the general distress. It is pardonable to cherish a feeling of uneasiness toward those who draw advantage from the source of our sufferings—I mean, it is a pardonable weakness.

The famous public orators who inflamed and armed the German nation wanted to teach what they had themselves learned, namely, that it had only been possible to enslave the Fatherland because it was dismembered. They could not establish unity of government, but they tried at least to bring about the unity of the nation, with the same mind, the same heart, and, for both heart and mind, the same nourishment. This nourishment, however, they decided must be adapted to the infantile character and weakness of German liberty—it must be simple and easily digested. The Jews, with their alien appearance, their separate culture, seemed too independent to be assimilated with the general liberty of the nation, they seemed too indigestible an element. And in addition there were all sorts of grotesque theatricals. The Germans wanted, as in an opera, to have a harmonious and uniform chorus; they wanted to have only Germans, as they had come from the forests described by Tacitus, red-haired and blue-eyed. The swarthy Jews formed a disagreeable contrast. Finally, there was the instinct, which at the time of the War of Liberation was still obscure and has only now become clear, that all the German nation's striving and struggling must be directed against the aristocracy, and it was this instinct also which made the writers hostile to the Jews. For the Jews and the nobility, that is to say money and power, or material and personal aristocracy, constitute the two last pillars of the feudal system, and they hold together. The Jews, menaced by the people, seek the protection of the lords, and the lords, frightened by the thought of equality, find their weapons and defences among the masters of finance. Let them be separated, by making the protection of the rulers unnecessary to the Jews, so that the former will be unable to take refuge in a Jewish loan and will be compelled to submit to the control of the representatives of the people, who will have power to grant or to deny.

Since there is no longer need of any symbol, of any battle cry, of any banner visible to and recognizable by all, and since all Germans know for what they are fighting and round what they have to rally, their Gallophobia, together with the sermons by which it was inflamed, has disappeared. We even turn to the French in friendship, for they have

fought for us, bled, atoned, and sinned for us, and we may reap with a pure heart what more than one guilty hand has helped to sow. It teaches us what true freedom is, how it is earned and how it can be pursued by bloodless means. Since then the teaching of anti-Semitism has also ceased, and the writers who sought to spread such pernicious doctrines have become silent. Their error may be forgiven them, for they have turned away from it. Their intentions were sincere, and truth is never purchased too dear, even at the price of passing madness.

* * *

HEINRICH HEINE

HEINE was born at Düsseldorf in 1797. After trying his hand unsuccessfully at trading, he studied law at Bonn, Berlin, and Göttingen. Poetry was, however, his main concern, and in 1822 he published a volume of poems, *Gedichte*, which immediately made him known. His revolutionary sympathies made him suspect in official circles and, after the July revolution, he found a home in Paris. He travelled in England and Italy, incorporating his impressions in two volumes of the *Reisebilder*. He died in 1856.

Of the following essays, the first three are from *Englische Fragmente*, and the fourth from *Aus den Memoiren des Herrn von Schnabelewopski*. All have been specially translated for this volume by Dr. William Rose.

I. LONDON

I HAVE seen the most remarkable thing that the world has to show to the astonished mind of man. I have seen it and am still amazed. There is still frozen into my mind this stony forest of houses, and between them the streaming throng of living human faces with all their variegated passions, all their dread haste of love, hunger, and hate—I speak of London.

Send a philosopher to London, but don't send a poet! Send a philosopher and stand him at a corner of Cheapside—he will learn more there than from all the books at the last Leipzig fair; and while the waves of humanity swirl round him, an ocean of new thoughts will rear itself before him, the eternal spirit that hovers overhead will breathe o'er him, the profoundest secrets of the social order will suddenly be revealed to him, he will hear and see with his physical senses the pulse of the world beating—for if London is the right hand of the world, the powerful, active right hand, then the street which leads from the Exchange to Downing Street may be looked on as the artery.

But don't send a poet to London! The undiluted seriousness of

everything, the colossal uniformity, the mechanical movement, the crossness of pleasure itself, the exaggeratedness of London oppresses the imagination and tears the heart. And if you should even want to send a *German* poet, a dreamer, who comes to a stop in front of every phenomenon, whether it be a tattered beggar-woman or a gleaming jeweller's shop—how much worse will it be for him, for he will be shoved against from all sides, or even be knocked over with a mild "God damn!" God damn! that confounded shoving! I soon noticed that these people are very busy. They live in generous style. Although food and clothing are dearer than in our country, they yet want to be better fed and better clothed than we. As is only consistent with their superiority, they have also large debts, but nevertheless, from sheer arrogance, they sometimes throw their guineas out of window, pay other nations, whose respective kings they supply with a handsome *douceur,* to box around for their amusement—and so John Bull has to work day and night to provide the money for these expenses, day and night he has to exert his brain to invent new machines, and he sits and calculates in the sweat of his brow, hastening along without giving himself time to look round, from the docks to the Exchange, from the Exchange to the Strand, and it is pardonable if, when he finds in his way a poor German poet staring at a picture shop on a corner of Cheapside, he shoves him rather ungently aside. "God damn!"

The picture, however, at which I was staring was *The Crossing of the Beresina by the French.*

When I was thus shaken out of my contemplation and gazed once more into the roaring street, where a chequered crowd of men, women, children, horses, and coaches (including a funeral), was pushing its blustering, shrieking, groaning, creaking way along, it seemed to me that the whole of London was just such a Beresina bridge, where everybody is trying, in frenzied fear, to force his way through in order to keep his morsel of life going, where the audacious rider tramples on the poor pedestrian, where the one who falls to the ground is irretrievably lost, where a man's best friends hasten on without pity over their comrades' bodies, and thousands are hurled into the icy pit of death who try, faint and bleeding, to cling to the planks of the bridge.

How much more cheerful and comfortable it is in our dear Germany! With what dreamy ease, with what sabbatical calm do things move there! Calmly the guard parades, the uniforms and houses gleam in the calm sunshine, the swallows flutter about the flagstones, corpulent ladies smile from the open windows, and there is plenty of room in the echoing streets. The dogs have room to sniff around each other, the people can stand about in comfort and discuss the play, or bow most deeply when some distinguished nobody or vice-nobody, with gay ribbons on his shabby coat, or a little court official, powdered and gilded, trips by and returns the greeting with gracious condescension.

I had made up my mind not to be amazed at the magnificence of London, of which I had heard so much, but I was in the same case as the poor schoolboy who made up his mind not to feel the thrashing he was to receive. What happened was that he expected the usual blows with the usual stick, as usual on his back, and received instead an unusual crop of cuts in an unusual place with a thin cane. I expected great palaces—and saw nothing but small houses. But it is the uniformity of these and their interminable number that impress one so forcibly.

The brick houses all develop the same colour on account of the coal smoke and the damp air, namely a brownish olive-green. They are all constructed in the same way, generally two or three windows wide and three high, and decorated on top with small red chimneys, which look like extracted teeth that are still bleeding, so that each of the broad, regular streets looks as though it were formed by two exceedingly long barrack-like houses. The reason for this probably lies in the fact that every English family, even if it only consists of two persons, likes to occupy a whole house, its own castle, and wealthy speculators meet this need by building whole streets, the houses in which they sell to different individuals. In the City, the part of London which is the seat of trade and of the various corporations, where ancient buildings are still to be found scattered among the new ones, and where the fronts of the houses are covered to the roof with names and figures a yard long, generally in gold lettering and in relief,—here the characteristic uniformity of the houses is not so striking, all the less since the eye of the stranger is continually engaged by the wonderful aspect of the new and beautiful objects exposed in the shop windows. It is not only that the objects themselves are so impressive, since everything that the English manufacture is the acme of achievement, and every luxury article, every astral lamp, every boot, every teapot, every frock tempts us with its gleaming finish, but the way in which they are laid out, their variety and contrasting colours, endow English shops with a peculiar charm. Even the ordinary necessities of everyday life are exhibited with surprising charm, familiar foods entice with new aspects, even raw fish are laid out so pleasingly that we are delighted by the play of rainbow colours in their scales, raw meat lies as though it were painted on clean, coloured china dishes, wreathed with cheerful parsley, in fact, everything looks as though it were painted and reminds us of the brilliant yet unassuming pictures of Franz van Mieris. Except that the people are not so bright as in these Dutch paintings, for they sell the most amusing toys with the most serious faces, and the cut and colour of their clothes are as uniform as their houses.

At the opposite end of London, which is called the West End, and where the less occupied world of fashion has its dwelling, uniformity is even more the rule; but there are very long, broad streets where all

the houses are as large as palaces, though externally they are by no means distinguished, save that, as in all the less ordinary London houses, the windows on the first story are adorned with iron balconies and even on the ground floor there is a black railing to protect the cellar-rooms beneath the ground level. In this part of the town there are also large squares—rows of houses like those described above, in the middle of which there is a garden, generally containing a statue, also enclosed by black iron railings. In all these streets and open places the eye of the stranger is never offended by the dilapidated cottages of Misery. Everywhere there is an abundance of wealth and distinction, while poverty, with its rags and its tears, is thrust into the byways and dark humid alleys.

The stranger who wanders through the great streets of London and does not happen to penetrate to the actual quarters of the proletariat, sees therefore nothing or very little of the plentiful misery that exists in London. Only here and there stands a tattered woman at the entrance to a dark passage, suckling a baby at her emaciated breast and begging with her eyes. If these eyes are still beautiful one perhaps looks into them—and starts back appalled at the world of suffering in them. The ordinary beggars are old people, mostly blackamoors, who stand at the street corners and perform what in muddy London is a useful service by sweeping a path for pedestrians, for which they demand a copper. The poverty which is accompanied by vice and crime does not creep out of its lairs until the evening. The more painfully its misery contrasts with the ostentatious arrogance of wealth, the more timidly does it seek to avoid the light of day, though hunger often drives it out of the narrow alleys at noon. And it stands gazing up, with entreaty in its dumb but eloquent eyes, at the rich merchant who hurries past to his business chinking his money or the leisurely aristocrat who rides past on his horse like a sated god, casting now and then a superior, indifferent glance at the throng of humanity, as though it were a crowd of insignificant ants, or creatures of a lower order whose joy or pain have nothing in common with his own feelings. For above the human rabble which crawls along the ground the English nobility soar like creatures of a higher order who regard the small land of England only as a *pied-à-terre,* Italy as their pleasure garden, Paris as their drawing-room, and the whole world as their property. They flit along without concern and without restraint, and their gold is a talisman which conjures into fulfilment their most extravagant desires.

Pitiable poverty! how must hunger torment you when others are revelling in sardonic luxury. And when a careless hand has cast a crust into your lap, how bitter must be the tears with which you moisten it! You poison yourself with your own tears. You are doubtless right to consort with crime and vice. The outlawed criminal often bears

more humanity in his heart than those cold, righteous citizens in whose bloodless hearts the powers of evil are extinguished, but also the powers of good. And vice is not always vicious. I have seen women on whose cheeks red vice was painted, but in whose hearts there lived a divine purity. I have seen women—I would I could see them again!

II. THE ENGLISH

UNDER the arcades of the London Exchange each nation has its assigned position, and their names are to be read on panels overhead: Russians, Spaniards, Swedes, Dutch, Maltese, Jews, Hanseatics, Turks, and so on. Every merchant used to stand beneath the panel on which the name of his nation was written, but nowadays they will be sought there in vain. People have moved on, and where formerly the Spaniards stood there now stand the Dutch; the Hanseatics have taken the place of the Jews; where one looks for Turks one finds Russians; the Italians stand where the French used to stand; even the Germans have made some advance.

As in the London Exchange, so in the rest of the world the old labels have remained, while the people beneath them have been displaced and others have come in their stead, whose new faces are ill-suited to the old inscriptions. The old stereotyped features of the nations, such as we find in learned compendiums and pot-houses, are no longer of any help to us and are hopelessly misleading. Just as we have in the last few decades seen the character of our western neighbours gradually becoming transformed, we can recognize a similar change on the other side of the English Channel since the raising of Napoleon's continental embargo. Reserved, taciturn Englishmen, travelling in hordes to France, are learning to speak and move, and when they come back their countrymen notice with astonishment that they no longer have two left hands and are no longer content with beef-steak and plum pudding. I myself saw one such Englishman demand sugar with his cauliflower in the Tavistock Tavern, a heresy against the strict Anglican *cuisine* which nearly knocked the waiter backward, for since the Roman invasion the English have never eaten cauliflower other than cooked in water and without any sweet ingredient. It was the same Englishman who sat down at my side, although I had never seen him before, and commenced such a courteous speech in French that I could not help confessing to him how glad I was to find an Englishman at last whose attitude to a foreigner was not one of reserve. He replied with equal frankness, and without a smile, that he was conversing with me in order to practise his French.

It is a striking fact that the French are daily becoming more con-

templative, more profound, and more serious, while the English are in the same measure trying to assume a more frivolous, superficial, and cheerful nature—in literature as in life. The London publishers are completely absorbed in the production of fashionable writings, with novels that deal with or reflect the brilliant doings of high life, as for example *Almack's, Vivian Grey, Tremaine, The Guards,* and *Flirtation* —the last-named novel supplying the best title for the whole type, for that coquetting with foreign mannerisms and habits of speech, that clumsy elegance, that ponderous ease, that sour fulsomeness and studied coarseness, in short the whole unpleasant activity of those awkward butterflies that flutter about the drawing-rooms of the West End of London.

On the other hand, what a literature is offered in the French book-world, that genuine representative of the will and intellect of the French! Just as their great Emperor employed his leisure in captivity by dictating his biography, by revealing to us the most secret resolves of his divine soul and turning the rock of Saint Helena into a Chair of History, from the heights of which his contemporaries are judged and posterity instructed, so the French themselves have begun to utilize the days of their misfortune, their period of political inactivity, as laudably as possible. They also are writing the history of their deeds; the hands that for so long wielded the sword are again becoming a terror to their enemies by wielding the pen; the whole nation is, so to speak, publishing its memoirs, and, if it takes my advice, it will arrange a special edition *ad usum Delphini,* with pretty, coloured illustrations of the taking of the Bastille, the storming of the Tuileries, and so on.

If, however, I have pointed out above how the English are endeavouring to become light and frivolous, and are creeping into the monkey-skin which the French are now stripping off, I must add that this endeavour is to be attributed to the nobility and gentry, to the aristocratic world, rather than to the middle classes. The working sections of the nation, on the contrary, especially the merchants in the factory towns and nearly all Scotsmen, bear the outer stamp of Pietism, I might say of Puritanism, so that this pious class offers the same contrast to the worldly-minded aristocrats as the Cavaliers and Roundheads who are described with such truth in the novels of Sir Walter Scott.

The Scottish bard is too much honoured if it is thought that his genius copied the outer appearance and inner way of thinking of these two historical parties, and if his ability to do justice to both and to treat them both with an equal fondness, with the lack of prejudice of a judging god, is regarded as an indication of his poetic greatness. One only has to cast a glance into the halls of worship in Liverpool and Manchester, and then into the fashionable *salons* of the West End, to see clearly that Scott merely described his own age and clothed

contemporary figures in ancient costume. If we remember that he himself, on the one hand, imbibed, as a Scotsman, the Puritan way of thinking through his education and the national spirit, and on the other, as a Tory who even regards himself as an offspring of the Stuarts, must be entirely royalist and aristocratic at heart, so that his feelings and thoughts embrace both sides with equal fondness and are at the same time neutralized by their mutual contradiction, then his impartiality in depicting aristocrats and democrats in the time of Cromwell is perfectly intelligible. It is an impartiality which has misled us into expecting to find in his history of Napoleon an equally fair description of the heroes of the French Revolution.

Whoever regards England attentively will now find daily opportunity to observe those two tendencies, the frivolous and the Puritanic, flourishing in the most repulsive manner and, of course, in conflict. Such an opportunity was afforded in particular by the celebrated case of Mr. Wakefield, a gay cavalier, who eloped practically on the spur of the moment with the daughter of a rich Liverpool merchant, named Turner, and married her at Gretna Green, where there lives a blacksmith who forges the strongest of chains. The whole hypocritical crew, the whole nation of God's Chosen, cried shame upon such wickedness. In the chapels of Liverpool the wrath of Heaven was called down upon the heads of Wakefield and his fraternal helper, prayers were offered that the earth should open and swallow them like the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and, to make even more sure of the divine vengeance, the aid of the London law courts was enlisted and the anger of the King's Bench, the Lord Chancellor, and even the House of Lords, called down upon the desecrators of sacraments, while in the fashionable drawing-rooms the conduct of the bold seducer was the subject of tolerant jests and laughter. This contrast between the two ways of thinking was demonstrated to me in the most amusing manner at the Opera one night, when I sat between two fat ladies from Manchester, who were visiting this rendezvous of Society for the first time in their lives and could not sufficiently vent their disgust when the ballet commenced and the handsome short-skirted dancers displayed the voluptuous charm of their movements, extended the long and lovely lasciviousness of their legs, and suddenly hurled themselves Bacchante-like into the arms of the partners who were tripping toward them. The warmth of the music, the primitive costumes of flesh-coloured material, the unaffected leaps, all these combined to make the ladies break forth into a prudish perspiration; their bosoms reddened with indignation, they groaned "Shocking! for shame, for shame!" the whole time, and they were so paralysed with horror that they were even powerless to take their lorgnettes from their eyes and remained in this situation until the curtain fell.

In spite of these opposite tendencies in life and thought, the English

do possess a uniformity of conviction which consists in the fact that they feel themselves to be a nation. However much the modern Roundheads and Cavaliers hate and despise each other, they do not cease to be Englishmen, and as such they are united and homogeneous, like plants that have blossomed from the same soil and are wondrously interwoven in it. From this springs the secret harmony in the whole life and activity of England, which at first sight only appears to be the scene of confusion and contradictions. Misery and superfluity of wealth, orthodoxy and disbelief, liberty and slavery, cruelty and humanity, righteousness and knavery, these contrasts are seen in their most extravagant extremes. Overhead the grey misty sky, on all sides humming machinery, figures, gas flares, chimneys, newspapers, tankards of porter, closed lips—all these things are so coherent that we cannot imagine one without the other, and things that would individually awaken astonishment or ridicule appear quite ordinary and serious when they are combined.

I think, however, that this will be our experience everywhere, even in those countries concerning which we entertain even stranger notions, and where we expect even more abundant cause for laughter or surprise. In fact our eagerness for travel, our craving to see foreign countries, especially in boyhood, have their origin in that mistaken expectation of extraordinary contrasts, that tendency to intellectual masquerading by which we imagine the people and cast of thought of other countries to be like those of our own land, so that we disguise our best acquaintances in foreign costumes and manners. When, for example, we think of the Hottentots, it is the ladies of our home town, painted black and with the requisite plenitude of posterior, who hover in our imagination, while it is our young wits who are clambering up the palm-trees as rangers of the bush. When we think of the dwellers in the Arctic regions, we likewise see familiar faces; it is a female relation who is gliding along in a dog-sled, the scraggy schoolmaster who is lying on a bearskin and calmly sipping his morning blubber, the wives of the tax-collector, the superintendent and the infibulation councillor who are squatting together and chewing tallow. Only when we actually see those countries do we realize that people, manners, and costume are, so to speak, bound up together, that faces are adapted to thoughts and clothes to circumstance—that, in fact, plants, animals, people, and country form a coherent whole.

III. WELLINGTON

THIS man was unlucky enough to be lucky just where the world's greatest men were unlucky, and that is what makes us indignant and makes him hated. We see in him only the victory of stupidity over

genius—Wellington triumphs where Bonaparte succumbs! Never was a man more ironically favoured by Fortune, and it seems as though she wanted to expose his dreary pettiness by raising him on the shield of victory. Dame Fortune is a woman and probably, after the manner of women, she bears the man who overthrew her former favourite a secret grudge, even though she herself willed his fall. Now, in the affair of the emancipation of the Catholics, she lets him win again, and in a struggle in which George Canning came to grief. He would, perhaps, have been popular if the wretched Londonderry had been his predecessor in office, but he followed the noble Canning, the great, much mourned, much worshipped Canning—and he won where Canning came to grief. Without such unlucky good luck, Wellington would perhaps pass for a great man; he would not be hated and his exact measure would not be taken, at least not by the heroic standard by which a Napoleon or a Canning is measured, and it would not have been discovered how insignificant he is as a man.

He is insignificant, and less than insignificant. The French could find nothing worse to say of Polignac than that he was a Wellington without celebrity. What, indeed, remains when a Wellington is deprived of the fame which his field marshal's uniform confers?

I have here offered the best apologia for the Duke of Wellington, but the reader will be surprised when I confess that I once praised this hero as hard as I could. It is a good story and I will tell it here.

My barber in London was a radical named White, a poor little fellow in a shabby black suit, that cast a white reflection, and he was so thin that the front of his face looked like a profile, while the sighs that rose from his breast were visible before they came to the surface, for he always sighed at the misfortunes of Old England and the impossibility of ever paying off the National Debt. "Oh!" I used to hear him sigh, "Why did the English need to worry who was governing in France or what the French were doing in their own country? The Aristocracy and the Church were afraid of the principles of liberty proclaimed by the French Revolution, and in order to suppress these principles John Bull had to sacrifice blood and treasure and, in addition, get into debt. The purpose of the war has now been achieved, the Revolution has been suppressed, the French eagles of liberty have had their wings clipped, the Aristocracy and the Church can now be certain that none of them will fly across the Channel, and so the Aristocracy and the Church should at least pay the debts that have been contracted in their interests and not in those of the people. The poor people——!"

Whenever he came to the words "the poor people," Mr. White sighed even more deeply, and his refrain was then that bread and porter were so dear, that the poor people were starving to feed fat lords, hunting dogs, and parsons, and that there was only one remedy. At these words

he used to sharpen his razor, and as he drew it to and fro along the strop he muttered with smouldering wrath, "Lords, dogs, parsons!"

It was against the Duke of Wellington that his radical rage seethed most violently. He spat gall and venom whenever he mentioned his name, and when he lathered me it was with the foam of fury. On one occasion I became quite frightened when he was shaving me just at the throat, while he went for Wellington with angry vehemence and muttered continually between his teeth, "If I only had him here under my razor, I'd save him the trouble of slitting his own throat like his colleague and countryman Londonderry—damn him!" I felt the man's hand trembling, and, fearful that he might suddenly imagine I was the Duke of Wellington, I tried to moderate his violence and soothe his wrath. I appealed to his national pride, I pointed out how the Duke had advanced the fame of England, that he had always been only an innocent tool in the hands of others, that he was fond of beefsteaks, and that—God knows what else I found to say in his praise as the razor glided over my throat.

What annoys me most is that Wellington will become as immortal as Napoleon. After all, the name of Pontius Pilate has remained as unforgotten as that of Christ. Wellington and Napoleon! It is a wondrous phenomenon that the human mind can think of both at the same time. There is no greater contrast than these two, even in their outward appearance. Wellington, a stupid apparition with an ashen soul in a buckram body, a wooden smile on his inanimate face—think at the same time of Napoleon, every inch a God! Never will there fade from my mind this picture. I still see him on his charger, with eternal eyes in an imperious face, gazing down, confident in his destiny, at his guards marching past. He was sending them to Russia, and the old grenadiers looked up to him with such awe-inspiring submission, so earnest in their consciousness of the future, so proud to die—

Te, Cæsar, morituri salutant!

I am often overcome by a secret doubt whether I really saw him, whether we were really contemporaries, and I then feel as if his figure, torn from the petty frame of the present, were receding, ever more haughty and imperious, into the twilight of the past. His name already sounds like an echo from a former age, as much a name of heroic antiquity as Alexander or Cæsar. It has already become a watchword among the nations, and when East and West meet they comprehend each other by the virtue of this one name. I myself experienced most profoundly the significance and magic of his name, when I once boarded in the London Docks a ship that had just arrived from the East Indies. It was a gigantic vessel with a large crew of Hindus. The grotesque groups and figures, the gaudy, unfamiliar costumes, the inscrutable faces, the quaint gestures, the uncouth ring of their lan-

guage, their merry laughter, and at the same time the seriousness of some of the placid yellow faces, whose eyes, like black flowers, gazed at me with romantic melancholy—all this excited in me a feeling of enchantment. I was suddenly transported to the fairy-stories of Scheherezade, and I felt that broad-leaved palm-trees, long-throated camels, gold-ornamented elephants, and other fabulous trees and animals would soon appear. The supercargo, who understood the language of these people as little as I did, suffered from the usual British limitations, and did not tire of telling me how stupid these people were, hardly anything but Mohammedans, a motley collection from all the countries of Asia, from the borders of China to the Arabian Sea, and even including some pitch-black, woolly-haired Africans.

Fairly weary of the obtuseness of the West, weary of Europe as I then was, this fragment of the East, moving with cheerful colour before my eyes, was a refreshing solace. My spirits were revived by some drops of that cordial for which it had so often languished in the gloomy winter nights of Hanover and Prussia, and the alien people must have seen how agreeable their appearance was to me, and how I would have liked to say a kind word to them. I could see in their ardent eyes that I also pleased them, and they would also have liked to offer me a word of friendship, but it was sad that neither of us understood the other's speech. At last I found a means of letting them know my friendly attitude. With hand outstretched in greeting and with reverent voice I cried the name *Mohammed!* Pleasure suddenly shone from the dark faces of the strange people, they crossed their arms in reverence, and returned my greeting with a gladdening cry, as they uttered the name *Bonaparte!*

IV. FROM THE MEMOIRS OF HERR VON SCHNABELEWOPSKI

(1)

IT WAS a very pleasant day in Spring when I left Hamburg. I can still picture the sun with its golden rays playing on the tarred hulks of the ships, and still hear the cheerful, long-drawn-out *Hoi ho* of the sailors. A harbour like this in Spring has besides an agreeable resemblance to the mind of a young man who is going out into the world for the first time, venturing for the first time on the ocean of life—all his thoughts are still like gaily coloured pennants, the sails of his ambition are inflated by the exuberance of his spirits, *Hoi ho*—but suddenly storms spring up, the horizon becomes clouded, there is a howling squall, the planks groan, the rudder is smashed by the waves,

and the poor vessel is dashed to pieces on some romantic cliff, or stranded on some flat prosaic shore—or perhaps, decayed and broken, its mast lopped off and without an anchor to give it hope, it returns to its home port to moulder away as a wretched, dismantled wreck.

There are also, however, people who are not to be compared with ordinary ships, but with steamships. They bear in their breasts a mysterious fire, they travel in spite of wind and weather, their stream of smoke flutters like the black plume of the ghostly rider of the night, their paddle-wheels are like enormous spurs with which they stab the ribs of the billowing sea, and the refractory, foaming element has to obey their will like a charger—yet often the boiler bursts and we are consumed by the furnace within. . . .

I shall never forget my first ocean voyage. My old great-aunt used to tell me so many fairy tales about the sea, and they all came back to me. I sat for hours on deck and thought of the old stories, and when the waves murmured I seemed to be listening again to my great-aunt. When I closed my eyes I saw her sitting before me with her only tooth, and her lips moved again quickly as she told me the story of the Flying Dutchman. I should have liked to see the mermaids who sit on white cliffs and comb their green hair, but I could only hear them singing.

However I strained to look down into the clear depths, I could not glimpse the submerged cities whose inhabitants have been bewitched into all kinds of fishy shapes, and lead a deep, a wondrous deep and watery existence. It is said that the salmon and the old rays sit there at their windows, dressed up like ladies, and gaze down into the street where the haddocks come swimming along attired like aldermen, where fashionable young herrings ogle up at them, and crabs, lobsters, and such-like vulgar crustaceans crawl about in swarms. I was never able to see far enough down, but I did hear the bells ringing below.

At night I often saw a large ship gliding past with widespread blood-red sails, looking like a swarthy giant wrapped in a broad scarlet cloak. Was it the Flying Dutchman?

In Amsterdam, where I soon after arrived, I saw the awe-inspiring Mynheer in person—on the stage.

The legend of the Flying Dutchman must be familiar to you. It is the story of the bewitched ship that cannot get to port and has been sailing about on the ocean since time immemorial. When it meets another vessel, some of the uncanny crew come alongside in a boat and ask politely if a packet of letters may be handed over. These must be nailed to the mast, otherwise the ship will meet with misfortune, especially if there is no Bible on board or no horseshoe attached to the foremast. The letters are always addressed to people who are unknown or long-since dead, so that sometimes a man receives a love letter

intended for his great-grandmother, who has been in her grave for a century. That wooden ghost, that uncanny ship takes its name from its captain, a Dutchman, who once swore by all the devils that he would sail round some cape, whose name I have forgotten, in spite of the violent storm that was then raging, even if he had to sail till the Day of Judgment. The Devil took him at his word, and he has to sail about the ocean till the Day of Judgment unless he can find some woman to redeem him by her faith. The Devil, stupid as he is, does not believe in the faithfulness of women, and he therefore gave the enchanted captain permission to come on land every seven years and to get married, using the occasion to work for his delivery. Poor Dutchman! He is often glad enough to be delivered again from the marriage itself and to get rid of his deliverer, and he then returns once more to his ship.

The play I saw in Amsterdam was founded on this legend. Seven years have again passed, the poor Dutchman is wearier than ever of his eternal wandering. He comes on shore, makes the acquaintance of a Scotch merchant, sells him diamonds at a price which is ludicrously cheap, and, hearing that his customer has a beautiful daughter, asks for her hand. This transaction is also agreed to, and we are introduced to the house of the Scotsman whose daughter is awaiting with fluttering heart the arrival of her suitor. She casts sad and frequent glances at a large, age-worn painting on the wall, which represents a handsome man in the costume of the Spanish Netherlands. It is an old heirloom, stated by her grandmother to be the faithful counterfeit of the Flying Dutchman as he had appeared in Scotland a hundred years before in the time of King William of Orange. Connected with this portrait is an hereditary warning that the women of the family should be on their guard against the original, and for that reason the girl has borne the features of the dangerous man engraved on her heart since her childhood. When the Flying Dutchman himself steps into the room the girl starts back—but not with fear, and he also is affected at sight of the portrait. He is told about the original, but is able to ward off any suspicion, laughing at the superstition and making mock of the Wandering Jew of the seas. Involuntarily, however, his tone becomes sorrowful and he describes the unendurable torments to which Mynheer is subjected on the immeasurable waste of waters, how his body is nothing but a fleshly coffin in which his soul must languish, how life has cast him off and yet death rejects him. Like an empty cask, thrown to one another in mocking sport by the waves, the poor Dutchman is hurled to and fro between life and death, neither of which will have him. His suffering is deep as the ocean on which he sails, his ship is without anchor, and his heart without hope.

I think these were more or less the words with which the suitor concludes. His betrothed regards him gravely with many a sideways

glance at his portrait. It is as though she has guessed his secret, and, when he asks, "Catherine, will you be true to me?" she replies resolutely, "True till death."

. . . . . .

When I returned to the theatre, I was just in time for the last scene where the wife of the Flying Dutchman is wringing her hands in despair on a high cliff by the sea, while her unhappy husband is to be seen on the deck of his uncanny ship. He loves her and is about to take his departure so as not to involve her in his misfortune. He tells her of his terrible fate and the dreadful curse which rests on him, but she cries with a loud voice, "I was faithful to you till this hour and I know a sure way to be faithful to you till death!" With these words she hurls herself into the sea, and thereby puts an end to the enchantment of the Flying Dutchman. He is redeemed, and we see the ghostly ship sinking beneath the waves.

The moral of this play for women is that they should take care not to marry a Flying Dutchman, and we men can see how even in the most favourable circumstances it is women who bring us to grief.

(II)

Every country has its particular kind of *cuisine* and its particular kind of women, and it is all a matter of taste. One man likes roast fowl and another likes duck; as far as I am concerned I like both roast fowl *and* roast duck, to say nothing of roast goose. If we consider the matter from an exalted and idealistic standpoint, women everywhere have a certain resemblance to the *cuisine* of the country. Are not the beauties of Britain just as wholesome, nourishing, solid, firm, unsophisticated, and admirable as Old England's good and simple fare—roast beef, roast mutton, pudding in flaming brandy, vegetables cooked in water, and two sauces of which one consists of melted butter? No *fricassée* welcomes us with its smiles, we are deluded by no flighty *vol au vent*, there sighs no ingenious *ragoût*, there is no dallying with a thousand kinds of stuffed, boiled, bounding, fried, sweetened, seasoned, rhetorical, and sentimental dishes such as are to be found in a French restaurant and which resemble so strongly the beauties of France. How frequently do we notice that in their case also the actual substance is regarded as being merely of secondary importance, that the joint itself is often of less consideration than the sauce, that the essentials are taste, grace, and elegance. The sallow, fattish, passionately spiced, humorously garnished, and yet languishingly idealistic *cuisine* of the Italians has all the characteristics of the Italian beauties. Oh! how I sometimes long for the *stufatos*, the *tagliarinis*, and the *broccolis* of my charming

Tuscany! Everything swims in oil, gently, lazily, and trills the sweet melodies of Rossini and weeps from sheer longing and the smell of onions! It is only when macaroni is eaten with the fingers that one can call it *Beatrice,* that which confers happiness.

I often think of Italy, particularly at night. The day before yesterday I dreamed I was in Italy, clad in the gay garments of a harlequin, and lying lazily beneath a weeping willow. The overhanging branches of this willow were made of macaroni, which dangled, long and lovely, into my mouth. Through the macaroni foliage there trickled, instead of the rays of the sun, streams of melted butter, and finally there fell a white shower of grated Parmesan cheese.

Ah! of imaginary macaroni one can never eat one's fill—*Beatrice!*

Of German cooking I will say nothing. It has all the possible virtues and only one fault, but I will not say which one. There is tender though irresolute pastry, amorous egg dishes, solid noodles, temperamental barley soup, pancakes with apple and bacon, virtuous domestic dumplings, Sauerkraut—happy is he who can digest them!

As far as Dutch cooking is concerned, it is distinguished from the latter first by its cleanliness and secondly by its toothsomeness. The way they dress fish is particularly delightful. The touchingly devout and yet profoundly sensuous fragrance of celery. Self-conscious naïvety and garlic. It is, however, reprehensible that they wear flannel undergarments—not the fishes but the beautiful daughters of sea-girt Holland.

* * *

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Friedrich Nietzsche was born at Röcken in Saxony in 1844. In 1878 he began a long series of works expounding his own philosophy. He denounced all religion and particularly Christianity because it succoured the weak, who, in Nietzsche's view, were a drag on the wheel of progress. In 1889 his mind became unhinged, and until his death in 1900 he lived at Weimar.

The present essay is used by permission of Alfred Kröner Verlag, Leipzig, and the Nietzsche Trust, and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

THE GREEK WOMAN

JUST as Plato has drawn into the light from all its wrappings and obscurities the inner purpose of the state, he also understood the fundamental cause of the position of the Hellenic woman in the state; in both cases he saw in that which existed around him the image

of the ideas that had been revealed to him, and compared with which actuality was indeed only vague and shadowy. Whoever, in accordance with general usage, regards the position of the Hellenic woman as unworthy and contrary to the dictates of humanity, must also apply this reproach to the Platonic conception, in which the actual state of affairs is, so to speak, only given logical precision. So here our question is repeated; ought not the character and position of the Hellenic woman to bear a *necessary* relation to the aims of the Hellenic will?

There is, of course, a side to the Platonic conception of women which was in sharp contrast to Hellenic custom. Plato gives women a full share in the rights, knowledge, and duties of the men, considering women only as the weaker sex, who will in all things achieve but little, though he does not on that account dispute their claim to all those things. We must not attribute more worth to this strange view than to the expulsion of the artist from the ideal state; these are boldly-drawn branch lines, swervings, so to speak, of the usually sure hand and the calm, observing eye, which now and then, at the memory of the dead master, becomes dim and depressed. In this mood he heightens the latter's paradoxes, and, in the abundance of his affection, finds satisfaction in exaggerating his doctrines in a very eccentric manner, even to the extent of audacity. The expulsion of the artists and the participation of women in the rights, duties, and knowledge of men; was, in the eyes of every Greek, a cynicism of that kind.

The most essential thing, however, that Plato, as a Greek, could say about the position of women in the state, was the exceedingly objectionable demand that in the perfect state *the family must cease*. Let us, for the moment, ignore the way in which, in order completely to satisfy this demand, he even abolished marriage, and substituted solemn unions, ordered by the state, between the bravest men and the noblest women, for the achieving of a handsome posterity. In that chief proposition he has indicated in the clearest manner—too clearly, indeed, offensively so—an important preparatory measure on the part of the Hellenic will for the engendering of genius. Even in the customs of the Hellenic people, however, the right of the family to man and child was limited to the utmost; the man lived in the state, the child grew up for and under the guidance of the state. The Greek will saw to it that the thirst for culture could not be satisfied in the seclusion of a narrow circle. The individual had to receive everything from the state in order to return everything to the state.

Woman therefore signifies for the state what *sleep* signifies for man. In her nature lies the healing power, which replaces what has been used up; beneficial rest, in which everything immoderate is confined; the eternal balance by means of which excess and superfluity are regulated. In her there dreams the future generation. Woman is more closely related to Nature than man, and in all essentials she remains herself. Culture

is in her case always something external, something which does not touch the core that is always faithful to Nature. Therefore the culture of women could appear to the Athenian as a matter of indifference, indeed, if one only pictured it to oneself, as something ludicrous. If anyone feels forced straightway to conclude that the position of women among the Greeks was unworthy and exceedingly harsh, let him only avoid taking as a criterion the "refinement" of modern woman and her claims, against which it is sufficient to refer to the Olympian women, together with Penelope, Antigone, and Electra. These are, of course, ideal figures, but who would like to create such ideals out of the present world?

And we must consider further what sort of *sons* these women have borne, and what sort of women they must have been to bear such sons! The Hellenic woman, as *mother*, had to live in obscurity, since the political instinct, together with its highest purposes, demanded it. She had to vegetate like a plant, in a narrow circle, as a symbol of Epicurean wisdom: λάθε βιώσας. Again, in modern times, when the principle of the state was completely disintegrated, her help was called upon. The family, as a makeshift for the state, is her work; and in this sense the *artistic purpose* of the state was necessarily reduced to the level of a *domestic* art. That is how it happened that the amatory passion, the only sphere completely accessible to women, gradually determined the very basis of our art. Similarly, that family education is regarded as though it were the only natural one, and only tolerates that of the state as a dubious interference with its rights; quite rightly so far as the *modern* state is concerned.

The character of women remains unchanged, but their *power* varies according to the state's attitude to them. They also really have the power to compensate, to some extent, for the deficiencies of the state—always faithful to their nature, which I have compared to that of sleep. In Greek antiquity they occupied the position which was assigned to them by the supreme will of the state, and they were therefore glorified as they have never been since. The goddesses of Greek mythology are their reflections; the Pythia and the Sybil, like the Socratic Diotima, are the priestesses out of whose mouths speaks divine wisdom. Now we can understand why the proud resignation of the Spartan woman at the news of her son's death in battle cannot be a fable. Woman felt herself, in her relation to the state, in her proper position; therefore she possessed more *dignity* than she has ever had since. Plato, who intensifies that position of women by abolishing marriage and the family, now feels so much *reverence* for them that he is, strange to say, seduced into abolishing their proper rank by a subsequent declaration that they are on an equality with men. The highest triumph of the women of antiquity, to have seduced even the wisest of men!

So long as the state is still in an embryonic condition, the woman, as

mother, predominates, and determines the degree and the phenomena of culture, just as woman is destined to make up the deficiencies in the disintegrated state. What Tacitus says of German women—*inesse quin etiam sanctum aliquid et providum putant nec aut consilia earum aspernantur aut responsa neglegunt*—applies to all peoples that have not yet developed a real state. In such circumstances people feel all the more strongly, and this becomes noticeable again and again at every period, that the instincts of woman, as the bulwark of the future generation, are invincible, and that in them Nature, in her care for the preservation of the race, is speaking with a distinct voice. How far this prescient force reaches is determined, apparently, by the greater or lesser consolidation of the state: under disordered and more arbitrary conditions, where the whim or the passion of an individual carries whole tribes with him, woman appears suddenly as a warning prophetess. In Greece, too, however, there was a never-sleeping anxiety: namely, that the terribly overburdened political instinct might shatter the small states to dust and atoms, before they had in any way achieved their several purposes. Here the Hellenic will continually created for itself new instruments, by means of which it spoke, to compose, to moderate, or to warn. It was, above all, in the *Pythia* that the power of woman to counterbalance the state manifested itself more distinctly than it has ever done since. That a race so split up into small tribes and town-communities was yet, at bottom, a whole, and was only solving the problem of its own nature in this disunity—that is vouched for by the wonderful phenomenon of the Pythia and the Delphic oracle; for always, as long as the Greek nature continued to create its great works of art, it spoke out of one mouth and as one Pythia. We cannot restrain the prescient recognition of the fact that individuation signifies for the will a serious difficulty, and that in order to reach those unique beings it *needs* an immense gradation of individuals. We are, to be sure, made dizzy by the reflection that perhaps the will, in order to achieve *art,* has emptied itself into these worlds, stars, bodies, and atoms; it should then, at least, become clear to us that art is necessary not for the individuals but for the will itself; an exalted prospect, at which we shall be permitted to glance once more from another aspect.

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HERBERT EULENBERG

HERBERT EULENBERG was born in Cologne in 1876. He now lives at Kaiserswerth am Rhein.

The present essay is taken from *Schattenbilder,* which was published in 1910, by permission of Bruno Cassirer, Berlin, and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

LORD BYRON

ON THE first of December 1900, one of the first of the damned souls to appear in the early morning before the gates of Hell was Oscar Wilde. Having shown his papers, which proved him to be the author of *Salome*, he was immediately permitted to enter and was conducted to a special cell. He straightway inquired of the devil who was attached to him for torture and personal service what were the hours during which visits could be made or received, and he learned, to his joy, that the hours were the same as on earth, namely, between 12 and 1 in the afternoon or at 5 o'clock in the evening. The poet smiled gratefully, gave his attendant the last franc that he found in his pockets, and said that he would like, first of all, to visit Lord Byron, whom he much admired. He asked whether he lived very far away. The reply was, "Oh, no, Sir, only just round the corner. His Lordship is fond of music and has settled down near the German quarter."

"Good," said Wilde, and after submitting to the hour's torture which was now to be part of his routine, he prepared to make his toilet. He cut his finger-nails, which had grown rather long, and polished them as well as he could with the boot-polish which was given him for the purpose. The Styx was a little too cold for a bath, so he employed the next hour in tying his cravat, the only garment he was allowed to wear. For each inhabitant of Hell is only allowed to wear the particular item of clothing which he most prefers. He set out as the clock struck twelve, detaching from the door of his cell, for future use, the black visiting card on which his name was written in his own blood, and proceeded along the endless, narrow, gloomy street.

As he groped his way from door to door, to his great good luck he met Charon, whose hour it was for taking Cerberus for a walk, the latter being half mad through always being tied to his chain and having to bark all the time. Charon guided him round the corner to his Lordship's lodging, which was considerably more spacious than the other cells in the neighbourhood. It also possessed a small, black window opening on the street, and through this Wilde peered cautiously, in order to take in the situation before entering.

To his astonishment he saw that Byron already had a visitor, whom he discovered, on closer investigation, to be none other than Shelley, clad only in a straw hat, while Byron, presumably to hide his deformed foot, wore nothing but a pair of brown top-boots. They were sitting opposite each other at an ebony table with their legs crossed. Shelley was puffing red smoke from a pipe and Byron was drinking from an enormous flask of fire-water. They were in the midst of a conversation, and Wilde, who did not want to disturb this strange picture,

stooped beneath the window and listened. Lord Byron was explaining to his friend in a voice that had grown somewhat hoarse:

"You can say what you like, Percy, the English are the most boorish fellows on God's earth. The Devil knows, they used to weary us so much that I should regard this place down here as a sanatorium if it weren't so confoundedly hot. And what do they do with all the money they abstract from the world, tell me that! They make soap, machines, and good clothes. That's all their civilization consists of.

"Things are getting so bad that I feel ashamed when I meet those Roman Greeks and poetasters, Horace and Tibullus. The other day Ovid said to me at the club in that sarcastic way of his, 'You are already richer than we ever were.' I thought of Manchester, and didn't know what to reply. I tell you, my friend, we are getting demoralized with all our millions, and in the end all we shall have left is Shakespeare, just as all that remains of Carthage is Hannibal.

"Don't interrupt me! They no longer care a hang for Art. London turns painters into house-decorators, and poets into journalists. When I wrote my first poem I deprived myself of my nobility in the eyes of the aristocracy. 'But surely that's what schoolmasters are for!' my mother said indignantly, and I became a Whig as a matter of course. From that time every Tory looked at me as though I were a tight-rope walker.

"When I published my first drama, *Manfred*, the Duke of Devonshire warned me, 'Poor old fellow! Think of your immortal soul before you become a *souffleur*.' It was the same day that Goethe wrote to me from Germany, 'I consider it an honour to correspond with you. Your dramatic efforts will, I am sure, find in the country of Shakespeare the high recognition which they deserve.'

"Well, Sir, not a single theatre bothered about them. Dammit all, Percy (though they don't allow swearing down here) before you interrupt me, just look at their theatre! Do you know what's the latest thing on the English stage? Three different kinds of artificial sunlight, coloured tail-coats, and genuine snowflakes which are manufactured in a refrigerator above the stage. The other day, when Hamlet appeared in the half moonlight on the terrace at Elsinore, with the snow falling all around, instead of applauding Hamlet at the end of the play they applauded the snowstorm. And when the prince was dead, he lay with his body in shadow, a blue lime-light shining on his face and a red one on his hands, and his eyes cast up to the ceiling. The rest was silence. In the background Shakespeare could be heard turning over three times in his grave with a creak.

"All their new plays are written for the sake of the costumes or the 'props.' The signposts to Greece have been hewn down, and whoever writes for the theatre in London to-day has to serve a couple of years' apprenticeship first with a conjurer. The poets in England are all

becoming swindlers and are living on bluff. They've even had that effect on the Irish hypocrite who's standing outside in front of the window and who let himself be put in jail instead of clearing out of the country."

And Lord Byron kicked open the door and pulled the frightened Wilde into the black room by his tie.

"No offence, old man," his Lordship continued, "I recognized you straight away by the red shadow you cast on the lodging of my friend Garrick across the way. I am glad you have come down to join us at last. This, Percy, is the young Athenian from Dublin whose *Salome* I gave you as a present on the 1st of April last. It's not a bad book, though it's a little strongly scented for my taste and smells of Paris like a marsh duck.

"Take a seat. Do you smoke? Or drink? You'll like it down here all right, though I'm afraid you've got leanings toward pietism. It's one of the bad effects jail has had on you.

"I'll call for you this evening and take you to the Disagreeables' Club. You'll find a few charming fellows there: Béranger, Heine, Aristophanes, Poe, Goldoni, and others. The club is quite international. We relate to each other fragments of our life. My friend Schumann composes the music. Unfortunately, laughing is against the rules, as it is everywhere here.

"If you want to see Shakespeare—he's generally the first curiosity that all the newly-arrived English ask about—we'll make a little detour across the asphodel meadows. That's where he takes his evening walk now with Homer and Li-Tai-Pe. He can't stand Sophocles' society any more for, in spite of themselves, they always start to talk shop.

"I'm afraid I shan't see you at dinner this evening—have they told you all the gourmets are compelled to eat the food they most detest?—since I've an appointment with Ludwig II, the King of Bavaria, whom I think you know. I have promised to read him the seventeenth canto of my *Don Juan,* which I have written while I have been down here, and in which I make the modern Englishman run the gauntlet. His infernal Majesty, Satan himself, has promised to appear in my honour in the guise of Cain. When you've been in Hell as long as I have and have forgotten its conventions, I'll invite you to these intimate gatherings."

His Lordship shook hands with his forlorn *bourgeois* brother, sparred Shelley amiably as far as the door, and began—this being his harsh daily penance—to search in his works for the least successful lines, which he could no longer alter, and to gaze at them with a melancholy air.

* * *

ALFRED KERR

ALFRED KERR was born in Breslau in the year 1867. He now lives in Berlin and has attained a position of considerable prominence as a critic. He has written a number of volumes of essays and criticism.

The present essay is taken from *Die Welt im Licht* by permission of S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

A GERMAN MISAPPREHENSION

THE so-called "sunny nature," which is always attributed to the blond races, is, from my own observation, to be found, less conscious indeed but more widely spread, between the Pyrenees and the Straits of Dover.

The Gauls are thought to be braggarts, deceivers. This is quite wrong. They are unpretentious. We often have to look closely, and for a very long time, before we notice in anything over there beauties which bloom unseen. The only people who make Paris bewildering, raucous, coarse, are not Frenchmen (who possess too much delicate taste) but rude, more Germanic Yankee bears who have not been licked by the Greek spirit.

Many things in France are unpretentious. In a room which looks like nothing, which can almost be called poverty-stricken, one is served with a meal fit for the gods. A man who looks like a petty official possesses an income of five thousand a year. The most enchanting fish, the most delicious crustaceans, the leanest meat, the most legendary fruits are everyday experiences in the provinces. What a French workman eats we do not even have in the Tiergartenstrasse. When the millionaires of Berlin open their ostentatious purses to procure crayfish, artichokes, slim, green asparagus, or mushrooms, these have long since lost their first freshness and fragrance. A man who travels first-class in France and possesses a motor-car looks like a vagrant. Many Parisiennes would be looked upon in Germany as tramps, explorers, factory-girls—but they are very worthy housewives or sturdy, simple daughters, and though they look like that they have already been able to put by a tidy income.

Brutality is rare among the French lower classes. A labourer or navvy can be persuaded by logical argument. Everybody has less regard for brute force than for a polished wit. And, as I have said, they look like tramps.

Childlike artists!

I was travelling in an express from Touraine to Paris. Splendid carriages: hotel rooms. A large space in which one can dance, where every one sits round in movable armchairs that can be rolled away. Easy chairs for idle gluttons in a railway train. A charming carpet on the floor. Attendants hand round refreshments. There are work-rooms with sewing-tables for ladies who wish to kill time during the journey in a domestic manner. And other cunning devices. This is something we have not got in the Germany of William the Second.

The practical luggage offices at many French stations! The technical arrangements; like a wonderful toy for children. A gigantic, circular table, continually moving in a circular direction, on which the luggage glides till it reaches its receiver. These tables are in continual motion; each trunk glides along on the moving table to where its owner stands and takes it down.

The Gauls were looked upon in antiquity as a good-natured, though excitable and warlike race of children, with a child's curiosity, even a certain childlike simplicity (which they clearly possess even to-day, with all their polish). It is the mind of the artist and the child which utilizes such station-toys, though these are practical. It is this mind which has also invented, or perfected to an extraordinary degree, the aeroplane—the toy, gravely important as it is, of the sky and the universe. On the other hand, they are far behind us in all their everyday hygienic arrangements. That is all that those asinine German journalists, whom God created in His wrath, like to emphasize. Concentrated alcohol; less washing; more spitting; living more crowded in smaller rooms; making an uncivilized din with their traffic. Only they have also invented the motor-car, the traffic medium of genius. Children and artists!

Often very tired children. Also decimated children; Bonaparte left a great quantity of the healthiest human flesh lying by the way . . . before Ludendorff, the unimaginative arch-butcher, came. The remainder are peaceable (in spite of the incitements of newspapers); prosperous (which is practically the same as peaceable); somewhat spoiled; but, at this peaceful stage, amazingly inquisitive and enterprising; with a childish gaiety in their inmost hearts.

To repeat: the so-called "sunny-nature," which is always attributed to the blond races, is, from my own observation, to be found, less conscious indeed but more widely spread, between the Pyrenees and the Straits of Dover.

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THOMAS MANN

THOMAS MANN, who is considered the greatest stylist in modern German literature, was born in Lübeck in 1875. He now lives in Munich. Of his novels, *Buddenbrooks* and *Der Zauberberg* (*The Magic Mountain*) are very well known and both have been translated into English.

The present essay is taken from a volume of essays published in 1925 under the title of *Bemühungen*, by permission of Messrs. Brandt and Brandt, New York, and has been specially translated for this collection by Dr. William Rose.

EN ROUTE

I HAVE been *en route* for weeks, which seem to me like years. I am tossed about on the seas, I am the Flying Dutchman. There echo in my ears the two *motifs* with the help of which Wagner has depicted so impressively the figure of the unhappy man: the quiet, dreary one which pictures the monotonous waste of the motionless sea, and the ballad-like refrain, *Hoi ho* and *Hoi he,* with which the overture opens. I have known the eternal ocean in both its moods, drowsy and turbulent, I have seen the sun playing on its blue surface and the moon on its slumbering gloom, and for hours at a time, with the wind howling and the canvas cracking, I have gazed into its turmoil, while the bow of the pounding, heaving ship hurled its weight against the waves that the tempest rolled toward it, and the whole fore part of the ship was sprayed with white froth. In the morning I have the ocean poured hot into my bath, and afterwards I eat porridge, eggs, and excellent marmalade for breakfast. Occasionally I go ashore, to submit myself to the influence of famous architecture, to observe the manners of foreign peoples, and so to extend the narrow limits of my education. Soon, however, as for Senta's pale lover, the cry again resounds, "To sea! To sea!"

It is a pleasure voyage of the Hamburg steamer *General San Martin* in the Mediterranean, the second it has undertaken this year. There is to be a third, and all the berths are already taken. I am not surprised: The *General* is an excellent boat, well cared for and exceedingly comfortable, not so large as the more frequently mentioned *Peer Gynt,* 6500 tons, if I am not mistaken, but commodious enough, with its dining hall and Winter Garden, its cosy saloons, its broad promenade deck, with room for about a hundred and sixty passengers without crowding. They live very well and are served by an army of white jackets; the food, which is luxurious, is eaten not without ceremony, we

dress for seven o'clock dinner, there is an orchestra, and sometimes a dance on the deck which is decorated with flags and strewn with talcum powder. I will not describe everything, since it might act as a social incitement, as the approving description of an orgy of post-War capitalism, with *nouveaux riches* in the gleaming *cabines de luxe*. It *is* like that. It *is* something of the sort. But it is also a German vessel, which shows our flag on the high seas and in foreign ports, with a captain whose earnestness and qualities are written on his brow, with courteous officers, good-natured crew, and an atmosphere of Hamburg matter-of-factness and neatness that is very soothing after the exotic oddities to which it carries us.

I do not occupy a *cabine de luxe*, and I am glad. I was given a respectable cabin on the boat-deck, which formerly belonged to the ship's doctor, a narrow but practically fitted little room with a writing table and numerous spacious drawers under the bed and in the chest. I am comfortable, but not too comfortable, and that is as it should be. My deck-chair for reading stands in front of the door.

I went aboard in Venice. Heavens, how moved I was to see the beloved town once more, after having only borne it in my heart for thirteen years! The slow journey in a gondola from the station to the steamer, with strange companions, through night and wind, will always be among my dearest and most fantastic memories. I listened again to its stillness, the mysterious beating of water against its silent palaces. I was again impressed by its air of distinction in death. The façades of churches, squares and steps, bridges and alleys, with isolated pedestrians, appeared unexpectedly and glided away. The gondoliers exchanged cries. I was at home. The steamer, which lay before the Piazzetta, was not sailing till the following evening. In the morning I went into the town, to the Piazza, to San Marco, through the streets. In the afternoon I stood on deck and surveyed the *ensemble* I love; the columns with the lion and the saint, the Arabic witchery and Gothic style of the palace, the showy projecting side of the fairy temple. I was certain that nothing I might see on the coming journey would be able to surpass this picture; my departure was really painful.

Now I am *en route*, for I know not how long. It is the strangest tour of inspection that I have ever undertaken. We are gaining such knowledge of the world as is achieved by sailors. We anchor here and there, we examine the ports, and again put out to sea. We oscillate between two continents, change our climate as we change our clothes—our clothes according to the climate—and our education is being extended to a degree we had not divined. How easy I shall find it in future to speak about Cattaro, when the conversation at dinner-parties turns that way. Perhaps I could use a little art and skilfully turn the conversation in that direction, in order to enjoy my globe-trotting experiences. The entrance to that narrow and picturesque little southern

town is unusual and fjord-like, skirted by mountains at the foot of which nestle charming villages. It rained while we were there, but it was much warmer than, for example, in Turkey, and nothing prevented us from going ashore and setting our exploratory feet on the soil of Jugo-Slavia. I could not make anything of the Cathedral façade. There is a Gothic rose-window over the portal, but there are also Romance *motifs*. In any case the total effect is magnificent. A very tasteful *dix-huitième* appears among the public buildings and the better class *bourgeois* houses of Cattaro. A large number of the sons of the Black Mountains, Montenegrins, had come down to the market-place and lent colour and animation to the picture by their national costume. We departed enriched.

What do you think! I have been in Egypt! Lesseps in a dress-coat stands on the great mole at Port Said. Some disliked the statue, but my view was that he could not very well have been set there dressed as a Greek god or as Amon-Ra. Finally they agreed that the correct thing would have been a morning-coat. We drove past his work, the Suez Canal, in a special train. The best thing I got out of it was *Aïda*, and I tried to whistle some bars of this melodious opera while we rolled along the traffic artery which forms a blue path in the desert sand. We went to Cairo, a town pulsing turbulently with oriental life. We lunched in an English hotel and roared out toward the pyramids of Gizeh in a charabanc, eagerly blinking at the land and the people, our eyes protected by coloured spectacles against the dust and sun of Africa.

I did not see much. I was surrounded by Arabs, men and youths, a gang compared with whom the tip-hunters of Southern Italy are veritable British aristocrats.

They have only one thought in their minds—baksheesh, and with all the means in their power, including a dreadful shrieking, they make this interest prevail over any other which might have brought us to Egypt. We really have to ward them off with the fly-fan which is bought immediately on landing for protection against the real flies; but they are worse than the real ones. Neither in the streets of Cairo, where they assail your ears as peddlers of mummy fragments, scarabs, postcards, and all manner of dubious souvenirs; nor in the desert, as donkey drivers, shoe-cleaners, and beggars, do they leave you in peace for a single moment. Yet one cannot get seriously angry with them. They are picturesque and jolly. Often good-looking, in an African way. They have teeth such as I have never seen in my life. One can see their incredible dentures from a distance as white strips gleaming in their dark faces.

The women appear to have no part in public life. Enveloped in black, nun-like, one sees them walking along, a water jar on their heads, lying when it is empty, upright when it is full. The men and

boys maintain the field, and they are a noisy nuisance. Even the children, often indescribably droll creatures, with amulets on their foreheads and sucking a piece of sugar cane or a cracknel, are generally seen in the arms of men. My donkey had three names—Bismarck, Maurice, and Dooley, according to circumstances, as the owner explained to me candidly while he trotted along at my side and examined my purse to see how much English silver it contained. In Capri I once rode on a donkey named Michelangelo, and it was very odd to hear the driver continually trying to spur him on to greater effort with the cry, "Courage, Michelangelo!" At any rate it was the name of a national hero, a proud name, only one and there was an end of it. But this one—varying according to circumstances—was entirely lacking in character and bore all the marks of obsequiousness in the interests of the tourist industry, amusing but contemptible. For the rest, Bismarck was a delightful beast, whitey-grey, small, with a large head and humorous eyes, clever, tough, intelligent, like most donkeys in this country. But I ought not to have said so. I ought not to have praised him. It cost me a lot of money.

We were in Luxor, in Carnac, in the royal graves of Thebes. A sleeping-car took us there and back by night. It is difficult to understand how this strip of land between two deserts, watered by the Nile, where rye, poppy, cotton, and sugar grow, could have nourished the culture whose ruins I saw jutting up in the burning heat of a sky from which not a drop of rain had fallen in three years. I walked in the dust amid these lotus and papyrus columns, these pylons, whose surfaces are so magically full of pictures and eternal inscriptions. I also descended with the others into the close atmosphere of the suites of chambers which comprised the tombs of the sons of the sun in the mountains at the edge of the Lybian desert, although it made me feel uncomfortable. I feel sure that every right-minded person will feel as I did, in the dusty heat of these chambers driven far and deep in the mountain, whose dry air has kept the colours of the wall-paintings so incredibly fresh throughout the years. A shameful feeling of intrusion oppresses one all the time. These people planned all their lives, and omitted no precaution, to prevent what is now happening. Amenophis IV, by whose glass-covered mummy in its coffin of porphyry I stood deeply moved for some time—the fine features of the young king are fully recognizable as they were in life, the dried-up arms crossed on the breast—had two false tomb-chambers with false royal mummies placed before his real one, to make protection certain. He was successful for a time; science was for long content with the first chamber, and then with the second. Finally, however, his ruse was detected after all, and he was himself discovered. It is a shame that cries to eternity.

The tomb of Tutankhamen has been completely emptied. Only the

gilded casing of the mummy remains. He was completely equipped for eternity down there and thought that he was secure with his domestic furniture.

I saw some of the treasures in the museum at Cairo, above all the chair with the golden lions' feet and the back painted with figures, a work of exceeding grace. Is it right and proper that such beauty of human feeling should again be made fruitful, or ought it, in accordance with a will whose majesty could not be destroyed by any passing of the centuries, never to have been revealed to our eyes?

A dilemma.

The East—yes, yes, I *have* absorbed it. I carry away timeless pictures, which have not changed since the days of Isis and the falcon-headed gods. I saw the brown men of Kemi draw up their buckets on the clayey shores of the Nile, the ploughman till with primitive instruments the ground that has been fertilized with sacred memories, the ox turning the water-wheel. I saw the camel, white, shabby, useful, old—with thousands of years in the gaze of its grotesque, wise, serpent-like head—I still see it, loaded, with turbaned rider, one behind the other, winding along the horizon in a long line, I shall always see it when I want to. The East *has* become mine.

On board, on board! You will perhaps think that Constantinople is somewhat inaccessible? Not at all. You only need to bathe in warm sea water in the morning for a couple of days, to put on a dinner-jacket in the evening, you pass unawares through the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, and you have arrived. To be sure there may be a gale *en route* and the sea may be rough, so that the dining-room is always half empty, and gets even emptier during the course of the meal, and you learn to appreciate the heartening qualities of vermouth. Then the boat is late, but only a couple of hours. And to make up for it I had on my arrival a stimulating surprise—an official reception by the Turkish port-authorities! I was invited into the smoking-room and introduced to the almond-eyed police officers. One of them made a speech about various things, which the other interpreted, and I gathered that they were extremely pleased to greet me in their town and very much hoped that my sojourn would be agreeable. I replied in fluent German that this was my first visit to Turkey and that I was looking forward with the greatest eagerness to visiting their celebrated capital; that I heartily appreciated the courtesy of their welcome. The exchange of compliments continued for a time. Finally I received a special recommendation on my passport in writing that went from right to left. There did not ensue any practical consequences or advantages for me, but I should like to know how the Turks discovered that I was coming.

The view of Constantinople from the sea is magnificent. The minarets look like Faber pencils with little round tops. The Hagia Sophia

possesses six of them. They ought not to be spoken of jestingly. The sanctuary, which has had such a chequered fate, is one of the most majestic buildings in the world; Allah is great there, and the floor is covered with carpets that arouse the envy of the amateur. San Marco on a gigantic scale. Nevertheless I remain faithful to the golden mysteriousness of my temple.

I saw other mosques, heard the Koran chanted, and the muezzin calling to prayer to all the four points of the compass from his crow's nest, saw the Moslems touching the ground with their foreheads with a gentle and beautiful movement. I saw also the Jeré-Batan cistern, the pillared subterranean vault in the water, a fantastic sight. I drove through the country, fertile, though inadequately cultivated, out to where, high above the blue Bosphorus, above the park of the summer residence of the German Embassy, lies the cemetery dedicated to the Germans who fell in the Dardanelles. On the cross of one hangs the burst life-belt in which he was washed ashore. Field-Marshal von der Goltz is also buried there.

The town itself is a disappointment. The economic decay is perceptible; there are no elegant shops; the Great Bazaar is a rag market; Pera Street is tedious; it is a mistake to have seen first the stream of oriental life in Cairo. The males, from the boy of five to the old man, all wear the fez (the low one, mostly dark red, and not the tall one of the Egyptians which is usually of a brighter colour). But the difference in outlook among the population, the division into old and young Turks, is obvious in the women, who are to be seen walking partly muffled up, in strict accordance with the faith, partly unveiled, in accordance with enlightened opinion. They get on well with each other. The emancipated woman is seen walking tolerantly with the traditionalist, the pious one with the liberal, whose lips are possibly of the coral colour of Paris.

Athens? I was there. I glided after another stormy night into the Piraeus, was rowed ashore, and drove in a Buick up to the Acropolis. I did not go so far as to have myself photographed in front of the caryatids of the Erechtheum, like many of my companions. But otherwise the way I wandered about among the noble ruins was no less vulgar and contemptible.

All the same, it is impossible to describe the sense of kinship, of intellectual elegance, of the youthfulness of Europe, with which these divine remains inspired us after the forms of Nile culture. All cultivated sentimentality apart—it is no trifling matter to look down from the citadel and out upon Salamis and the sacred way. It is, ultimately, the beginning of all of us, it is veritably the heroic land of our youth. We put off the sultry East, our soul became clear and serene, there arose a vision of mankind which often fell but climbed again and again toward the sun. Where I stood one feels that he alone is truly the

son of Europe whose soul can in its best hours find its way back to Hellas. One breathes there the fervent wish that the Persians, in whatever shape they come, may always be hurled back.

All honour to Stinnes! I have seen magnificent things, and I returned on his capitalistic pleasure barque with admiration, love, and a human pride of youth in my heart. I saw the original Eleusine relief (with the Eros), I saw the reflecting Athene, the bronze Ephebes of Anticythera and that incomparable marble—half eaten away by the sea to which it had been thrown by barbarians—the youth bending to throw the discus; to stroke that wonderfully modelled back with one's hand is an intellectual and sensual delight. The way in which Phidias, also called Pheidias, was able to make the thinnest of garments cling in the most delicate folds to the soft figure of a woman, is really amazing. It is a pity that so much talent was combined with human weaknesses about which it would, perhaps, be better to remain silent. In confidence —he purloined materials and died in prison.

We are steering for Messina and, after visiting the celebrated Taormina, are to proceed to Naples to examine the progress which has been made in the excavations at Pompeii. If anyone thinks we are leaving Algiers alone, he is mistaken. We shall cast a short but keen glance at the essentials. We shall anchor before Malaga and betake ourselves to Granada, inspecting the Alhambra as well as attending, with mixed feelings, a bull fight. We shall run into Barcelona and take the serpentine route by coach to Monsalvat. Our pleasure trip ends in Genoa, but that is a long way ahead, though at times I am inclined to wish it were less. The good living and all the variegated superficiality are beginning to bore me. And it is cold, for except in Egypt we have arrived everywhere too early in the season for this year's weather. We are now in the Ionian Sea, and I am sitting in my winter clothing and have turned on the steam heating of my respectable cabin. I was spared the more serious stages of sea-sickness, but my stomach is often inclined to hyper-acidity and uneasiness.

I shall henceforth be able to hold my own in company, that is certain. I shall be able to speak like a book based on observation, hasty though it was. I am impatient to enjoy this social advantage. I wish the time had come.

HOLLAND

Introductory Note

IT HAS already been observed that one of the most significant facts in European literature is the widespread influence of the *Spectator* essays. Among the many imitators of Addison stands Justus van Effen, who translated the *Guardian* into French, and then brought out his own *Spectator* directly modelled on the English original. Van Effen's essays are still regarded as classics in Dutch literature. And just as in the eighteenth century van Effen followed English models so in the nineteenth century we find Huet applying prophetic passages from Carlyle to his own country and conditions.

After all allowance has been made for English influence in this direction and French influence in another, it would be a mistake to suppose that Dutch literature is merely derivative. It makes its own distinctive contribution and has its own characteristic note. Just as the Dutch school of painting has qualities that are easily recognizable, so the salient features of Dutch literature are always evident. The struggle against the sea on the one hand and against the foreign oppressor on the other has left its mark in a certain earnestness that is seldom absent from the work of Dutch writers. The simple and thrifty life of the people is reflected in a homely and intimate style. The sense of civic pride and the consciousness of achievement raises this at times to the heights of impassioned expression. During the last fifty years writers have appeared who have not scrupled to discard the more ponderous methods of their fathers and have founded the new Sensitivist school. Those who follow this method may be best described as impressionists who are at pains to avoid the eccentricities usually associated with impressionism.

* * *

JUSTUS VAN EFFEN

JUSTUS VAN EFFEN (1684-1735) came to England in 1715 and there made the acquaintance of Pope, Swift, and Newton. He was made a member of the Royal Society and translated Addison and Steele's *Guardian* into French. His own *Spectator* appeared in Amsterdam in 1731, coming to an end at the editor's death in 1735. It was at first entirely written by van Effen himself. His object was to expose and to ridicule what seemed to him wrong in his contemporaries but, at the same time, to praise their good qualities.

The following essays are from the *Hollandschen Spectator* and have been specially translated for this volume by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt.

I. WOMANLY CLEANLINESS AND MANLY DIGNITY

MR. SPECTATOR, the other day, having been invited by a good friend, I fell into a meditation, before the door was opened to me—not a strange thing for an author to do, but one which caused me to lapse into a carelessness which I afterward regretted; for on entering I stepped beside the mop lying on a cleanly scrubbed marble floor, close to the steps. But I soon became aware of my mistake when I saw my dirty footsteps, and I at once turned back to clean my feet with the utmost care. I was cross with myself because of this thoughtlessness of mine, as I have always considered it a kind of impoliteness, even something incompatible with kindheartedness, to spoil the work of others, the more so as it is so easily avoided. I soon found that the error I had committed had not passed unnoticed by the mistress of the house. Scarcely had I entered when I heard her, after having muttered something to herself, call out: "Kate, bring a mop, at once, hurry up!" Yet she received me politely, though somewhat coldly, and conducted me to her husband in the dining-room. There I found everything of the utmost neatness, especially the table, which, covered with fine snowy linen, seemed to smile upon me by its agreeable and trim cleanness. After we had eaten something, the host poured out a glass of white wine for me, recommending it as an excellent Bergerac. This, though it seemed good in most respects, nauseated me a little on account of its great sweetness. My polite friend seemed to notice my nausea, although I tried to hide it; at least I had scarcely emptied my glass, when he called to the footman: "Bring some red wine; the gentleman may like it better." The words "red wine" threw the hostess into great agitation, and without allowing me time to express my opinion, she said: "Dear, Mr. N. would perhaps like a glass of Mosel or Rhenish wine; we have excellent old Rhenish wine, Sir, you ought to try it." Meanwhile Pontac had already been put on the table, and my friend had poured out a glass of it for me, which was followed by several others. I do not remember ever to have drunk better wine nor ever to have imbibed any in a more gingerly fashion. It was not only my first error that made me cautious, but the lady's eyes fixed on my hand whenever I took up my glass, increased my timidity, and I never put it to my lips without turning aside, so as not to soil the beautiful linen by the smallest drop. My friend, who is a man of sense and

who was meanwhile engaged in a serious conversation with me, was not nearly so careful and, while he poured out the wine, a drop now and then fell on the table-cloth, which every time made his wife jump, for all the world as if she had suddenly been pinched, or pricked with a needle. She contented herself, however, with, as soon as possible, rubbing some salt on each drop. At last my friend went so far in his untidiness that his lady begged him, concealing her displeasure with a smile, to mind what he was doing and not to make such a mess. "All right, dear!" was the answer, "it was an accident, I shall be more careful in future."

But this was **accomplished** so ill that, slightly touching a full glass with the bottle, he made a great splash on the cloth. Now his wife suddenly lost her patience and with tearful eyes burst into the following speech: "You seem to be doing it to spite me, Sir; this is the best table-linen I possess in the world. Never mind, you can invite as many guests as you please, but I promise you I shall know in future how to lay the table." The same thought she expressed several times over in an incredible flow of words, in which, after the manner of eloquent women, she repeated the same thing in ten different ways. My friend, after listening a while to this angry invective, with the greatest calm and with eyes fixed on his wife's face, picked up the bottle and, with the same coolness, poured the wine all over the table-cloth, in front of me, of his wife, and of himself, and when he considered it sufficiently soaked, he as calmly put down the bottle again. You can imagine, Sir, that this was not like the pouring of wine at a peace-offering, it was indeed so far from it that the lady, who, during this proceeding had been like one dumbfounded, thunderstruck, or in a fit, suddenly arose from the table with glaring eyes, like a fury from hell, ready to fly into her husband's face.

"Oh, what do my eyes behold here," she screamed. "Oh, what will be the end of this? Are you raving mad, Sir, or are you possessed by the devil?" More she could not say, she fell back into an arm-chair, where she lay for a considerable time, half suffocated by her sobs and drowned in tears. During the whole of this thunderstorm her husband remained unperturbed; he persisted in looking at her with severe and angry eyes, without addressing a single word to her. But as soon as the storm seemed to abate a little and she got up to leave the room, he stopped her and requested her, in the tone of one who has the right and the will to be obeyed, to sit down beside him. This was achieved after some resistance, whereupon my friend, without raising his voice, spoke to her with great composure and earnestness in this fashion:

"I am not sorry, child, neither for your sake nor for mine, for what has happened here in the presence of this gentleman; I know him for a

man of reason and modesty; I am only sorry for his sake, because, the first time he has graced our table with his presence, he has had to drink the bitterest wormwood, instead of savoury wine. Though we have only been married a short time, I have already repeatedly noticed, in all sorts of trifles, that you have tried to undermine the authority that is my due. But I have never shown that I noticed this, because I wanted to see how far your disrespect for your husband would go, and also because I preferred to wait for an important occasion in order to show you my feelings concerning this. Know then, once and for all, that, however clean the table-cloth may be (and I want it to be clean) I intend that my friends and I shall drink the kind of wine we like best, and that without timidity or slavish circumspection; and that, as often as it shall please you to taunt me on that account, as if I were a boy, I intend to do the same that has to-day roused you to such improper anger better befitting a fishwife than a decent woman. When, as a wooer, I tried to win your heart I used only honest means to do so. I sacrificed everything to you except my reasonableness and sincerity. I preferred to please you gradually in this way rather than quickly by vile and cowardly flattery. So that, my sweetheart, if you are subject to whims and caprices these are not of my making, and there is no need for me to suffer from them. I shall be happy to exert myself in trying to please you in every reasonable way as my tenderly loved wife. But I will not have my undeniable rights, due to me before God and the world, trampled upon by you. You may rest assured that I wish to be, and shall be, master in my house; I even had the courage to tell you so before our marriage. If this does not please you, Madam, if you are not reasonable enough to know *my* right and *your* duty and to adapt yourself, why, there is a remedy. My sincere and tender love of you will be mortally wounded, but yet it is better to act in time, than when it is too late and no means are too bitter to free oneself from an unhappy life. You can return to your parents with your wedding-gift and see if they are willing to give in to your whims."

While he was speaking these last words my grave friend shed some manly tears, but in the course of the speech I had noticed a gradual increase of the tenderest emotions in his young wife's eyes. At last they filled with tears, not now of fury, but of repentance and love. Without speaking a word she threw herself on her husband's neck, clung to him like a burr, and mingled her tears with his. At last she let him go, to fling herself at his feet, but, prevented from doing so by him and clasped once more in his encircling arms, she broke out into these tender words, frequently interrupted by sobs: "I be separated from you, my love? I be separated from you? A thousand times should I prefer to receive death at your hand. I acknowledge that I

am not worthy of your love, but, I pray you, ascribe my great error to my childishness. Yes, my angel, I feel that you are quite right; you must be lord and master in your home, and you shall be, from this moment, and I firmly intend to find my honour and happiness in obeying and pleasing you with the most willing submissiveness. I am not only your wife, but also a fool who cannot control herself, but who in future hopes to be sensible enough to be happy to depend in everything on your good sense. For God's sake, my love, depend on it and let not the least indignation with me linger in your tender heart. Let my sincere tears of repentance and an indulgent pity for my deplorable weakness entirely take away that impression. I beg and beseech that you will have the goodness to add another benefit to this; do not commit the error, my second life, to condone small faults in me; I am not wise enough for this gentle forbearance of yours. I pray that you will not allow the slightest error in me to pass by, for fear a greater one may arise from it. And you, Sir," she continued, turning to me, "I dare not look you in the face; I have unpardonably offended you! Forgive me, but only from kindness and not for my sake, for I do not deserve it, but from friendship toward my husband, who, I assure you, feels the greatest respect for you. You must to-day have thought me the most contemptible fool in the world; I pray you heartily to give up such thoughts of me. What I am going to ask you cannot displease my husband. I hope you will honour our house and our table with your presence as often as your occupations shall permit you, and not refuse to witness the happy change which I hope will remain steadfast in my heart."

Then, after tenderly embracing her husband once more, she rushed from the room to reappear a moment after with clean linen, laying the table anew with the former cleanliness, and flinging that which she had taken off contemptuously in a corner. At the dessert they had another difference of opinion, but not at all like the first. My friend whitewashed his young wife's error and blamed himself for having gone too far, she, on the other hand, pleaded his cause with all imaginable arguments, asserting that he had acted admirably as, with longer forbearance, she would have been bereft of the most wholesome lesson which could ever have been given her. In one thing they agreed, that they had never had a happier and, at the same time, unhappier day and had never felt their mutual love more strongly.

Thus ended our tragi-comedy. Since that day I have been a daily visitor in that home and have, with the greatest pleasure, seen the young wife's perseverance in her good conduct. She is almost as proud of her respectful submissiveness as some women are of their imperiousness. She herself urged me, Mr. Spectator, to tell you this, in order that her conversion may lead many masterful, foolish women, who do

not know that their happiness lies in doing their duty, to see the error of their ways.

II. THE ALWAYS BUSY HOUSEWIFE

MR. SPECTATOR, I have read with great pleasure your argument on the real advantages produced by great women by the careful observance of their household duties, and only a complete fool would fail to agree with you in this matter. Our middle-class women in Amsterdam are not in great need of such lessons, however, for their own inclinations in this respect are fostered by their education. On the contrary, many of them go a good deal too far in this careful observance, and it would not be inappropriate, by good arguments, somewhat to moderate and cool their ardour with regard to this. My wife is among the number and I can truthfully say that her too great and anxious endeavours to make everything in my house run more smoothly than it is possible, is the only thing that causes unrest and discomfort in my, for the rest, happy married life. I belong to the respectable middle class and am, what is commonly called, well-off as regards worldly goods. My wife is not bad-looking, modest, and not without common sense, so chaste that the most foolish jealousy could hardly suspect her, I being the only man in the world for her, and she bears me as much love as could be expected of a woman of her kind and conduct. She seems to be tied to her house and it is only with a kind of tender compulsion that I can now and then persuade her to go and see some of our nearest relations. She never feels the need of taking a walk; she never sits down for so much as half an hour a day, neither at dinner, nor at other meals. She almost manages to be in several places at once; one moment I hear her in the garret, the next she is in the cellar; she disappears from the hall, to appear again in the kitchen. I even believe that, if sleep did not keep her worn-out body in bed, she would get up twenty times during the night to see if everything was in good order. Her restlessness drives her to and fro, like a top lashed by many whips. She drives on her servants in the same manner and tries to inspire them with the same carefulness, although they can, of course, not have the same interest in her affairs. If she is to be believed, there are not any good maids left nowadays; there are now nothing but untidy, awkward, dirty, lazy sluts. It does not suffice for her servants to do something well, it has to be done in her fashion and the most powerful argument to show the necessity of this is: "In my dear mother's house this or that was always done in this way."

When I come down in the morning I usually run my eyes all over the dining-room to see if everything is in order, and when I find everything as I like it, I hope at least to have breakfast in peace and quiet

and to enjoy a short rest. But in this I reckon without my hostess. My domesticated little wife has a sharper eye. No sooner has she entered the room than she flings up her arms and casts up her eyes to the ceiling as if she wanted heaven to bear witness to the bad conduct of her maids.

"Now see how this lies here! Who has ever seen such a household in his life? I should not know where to hide for shame, if anyone came in. Now look at that beautiful picture. Yes, of course, I shall have to do everything myself in future."

Occasionally the causes of her discontent are much smaller still. Similar lamentations are brought about by a bit of thread or peel that she produces from a hidden corner, giving it the name of a dirty, filthy mess. She cannot actually be called ill-tempered. She is never heard to scold, to storm, or rage. No, she is only cross, she grumbles, grouses, and is grumpy all day. No woman in the whole town of Amsterdam is so badly served as she is; and she has repeated this so often that, at last, it has become the truth. Though she sees to it that the maids get enough to eat and drink, she scarcely allows them time to have their meals, under pretext that they sit longer at table than she does herself.

They get out of all patience because she follows them about continuously, administering incessant corrections and reproofs. They lose their heads and the fear of not doing things correctly is the very cause of their doing them badly. It has happened that the repeated injunctions to be careful with a piece of china had a natural result in its being dropped and broken. This behaviour of my worried little housewife makes it utterly impossible for good servants to stay with us long. Three or four times a year I have to see new faces in my house and before the poor drudges well know the place of the kitchen utensils, they are dismissed or they pack up their belongings and leave without stopping to ask for a character. This goes so far that, on returning from some journey, I am often told when the door is opened that the master is not in, but is expected every moment.

Besides, my wife is so well-known and has such a bad reputation among the serving class, that we find it impossible to get any maid that has already been in service. We have to be satisfied with green and inexperienced German girls, just after they have formed part of the cargo of one of the ships that bring over great loads of them. You can imagine, Mr. Spectator, what happens when they enter our service. They do not know how to wash a pan or how to hold a broom or a pope's head. While they were in the company of cows and pigs they could not get an idea of Dutch cleanliness, and yet they are scolded all day long for their ignorance of matters of which they cannot possibly have any knowledge. You will understand, Sir, that I suffer much from all this. Fortunately I have much patience, but occasionally it

comes to an end, and finding that, instead of getting pleasure out of the company of my wife I get nothing but trouble, I am compelled to take a walk or visit a friend. Though, for the rest, I respect and love her, I have to do this in order to regain my former tranquillity of soul and in order not to fly into a passion with her.

I have also tried, occasionally, with words, gentle but serious, to bring her to a standstill and to convince her that, by her too great precision, she renders herself the unhappiest woman in the world making me, moreover, share in her unhappiness. I must acknowledge that, on such occasions, she does not fly into a rage as other women of my acquaintance are apt to do. No, she only says: "Good gracious, dear! why do you meddle? Let me manage my servants. I do not interfere in your business. You are always on the side of the domestics and not on mine. You seem to do it on purpose. I suppose I have enough sense to keep my maids in order. Am I to dance to their piping or they to mine?"

When I contradict this random talk with concise reasoning, to which she cannot give an answer, there are sighs and tears and the only reply I hear is: "Very well, dear, all right then, let the household take care of itself, I will wash my hands of it. This is nice thanks I get for all my care and worry." And forthwith my little wife starts sulking, which she keeps up all day long, never speaking a word beyond muttering something to herself now and then. In that state she suffers all that can be suffered by such enforced silence. Her eyes and gestures show her to be on the rack of her natural restlessness, which, not finding an outlet by activity, affects her mind, and would, if it went on for a long time, consume her within. This moves me to genuine pity which sometimes grows to such an extent that I would as soon she cared too little as too much for her household, and that she had a little of that coquetry which seems so detestable to you.

Be kind enough, Mr. Spectator, to use your common sense and experience to help me to regain my own rest and that of my careful housewife. I assure you that I shall be greatly obliged and be docile in following your advice.

The honest writer of this letter has understood the matter very well. His wife's misfortune seems indeed to be due to inborn restlessness, fostered and increased by education. This restlessness is no other than a real disease which she brought with her into the world and against which reasoning is no more effective than it is against ague. To cure her from this malady her blood, nerve-juices, and the instruments of her body would have to be altered completely. There is only one method which occurs to me to ensure that the husband shall not take too great a share in that misfortune. It is for him to exert himself to the utmost to hear and be deaf, to see and be blind, to consider the

grumbling and muttering and murmuring of his worried wife as of no more account than the bickering of a brook or the purring of a cat and to pay as little attention to it. In my opinion this ought not to be very difficult. I advise him particularly never to speak with her about this complaint. I am sure that this will worsen the evil. I can understand that the poor woman, being made to feel herself in the wrong, but lacking the power to improve herself, must needs get more melancholy and sullen. This is all I have to say on this matter. But I wish to make some remark concerning one of those commonplace sayings with which the wife seeks to weaken her husband's arguments, namely that the husband should manage his affairs independently of the wife and the wife hers independently of the husband. Women are at least as domineering as men, and certainly as weak. Nothing therefore irks them so much as the duty of being submissive to their husbands. In this they are confirmed while they are still maids by the silly and effeminate flattery of their lovers, who adore them as if they were goddesses and lead them to believe that this same slavish humiliation will continue after marriage. Nothing is commoner than to hear young maids in this country say: "I allow myself to be ruled by a man! Certainly not; let no one imagine it; that is not in my nature." I have spoken seriously, on more than one occasion, to some among them who were not without sense and reason, asking them whether they believed that Holy Scripture contained nothing but the truth and whether, in case they agreed, they had, when reading the Bible, skipped everything concerning the duty of wives toward their husbands. I could tell by their faces that they would have preferred it if this had been omitted from the Holy Book, and that they accepted everything as the truth, excepting only this. But they dared not say so. They tried to get out of the difficulty by subterfuges. "It is true," was their answer, "I have nothing against that. The man ought to be the master of the house, but he should rule his wife properly." But when I entered a little more deeply into the meaning of these words, I found that "rule properly" meant rule not at all, and that all the ruling, except for the name, should be left to the women, who love to domineer.

Others adduced the same reasons as our restless little woman, namely that a man ought to mind his own business and a woman hers, meaning by this the whole management of the house, which is so much as to say that earning the money is recommended to the care of the men and spending the money is to be left to the women. I should like to know what lawyer may have made that division. I am quite ready to acknowledge that it is far below a man's dignity to be a cotquean, and that he may as well leave all the meaner cares of housekeeping to a diligent and watchful wife. But if the woman does not behave wisely in some matter there is no doubt that this part of the management of the house, only acquired from the head, rightly falls back to the head.

Suppose there is something in the wife's management that the man would like to be different, he will give a reason for his wish, the wife will oppose hers. But in case they cannot agree, what means are there to settle the dispute except absolute supremacy? There must be one who can at last say: "I desire it to be thus," and who must then be obeyed. No government can exist without absolute supremacy, whether this be enforced by the law or by the will of the rulers.

But I hasten to put an end to this. I doubt if these ethics will be very popular with the majority of women.

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BRUNO DAALBERG

Bruno Daalberg, whose real name was Petrus de Wacker van Zon, was born in 1758. He wrote *Comical Essays for the Breakfast- and Tea-Table* from which the following is taken. He was a humorist whose style bears some resemblance to that of Laurence Sterne. He died in 1818.

This essay has been specially translated for the present volume by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt.

FEASTS OF THE OLDEN TIME

I DARESAY my readers know that if cloth bought is not immediately paid for, a bill is the consequence. Unholy invention! Clear proof of lack of generosity! One can evidently no longer get anything for nothing, but as it seems advisable to choose the lesser of two evils and as, by putting off paying, the money remains in their pockets a little longer, many people, observing Ulpianus' rule, *minus solvit qui tarde solvit* (he pays less who pays late), prefer seeing a bill, to feeling a vacuum in their purses, and give to these quiet guests a home in a drawer of their cabinets.

Authors or scholars, call them by what name you like, belong as a rule, to those who are more familiar with bills than with receipts. And I, imitating the great men of my profession, have applied this method so well that I only know a receipt by name and my unpaid bills become worn with lying.

Is it strange then that, rummaging among my papers and finding a bill on which I read the words: "Received with thanks," I was startled and turned pale? I thought that perhaps a too liberal drink was the cause of my committing this error, or that my dear wife, not possessing so much stoical firmness as myself, had allowed herself to be persuaded to such weakness. But on looking more closely I found that it was

written on the thick old paper of last century. The writing did not seem modern to me either, and on perusing it I came to the conclusion that it was the receipt for the costs of my great-grandfather's wedding. *Requiescat in pace!*

This monument of old times gave me much food for reflection and for laughter; I was glad to think of the pleasure those old folks seemed to have had at that wedding. Perhaps gratitude also formed part of my feelings, for did I not owe my existence to that wedding? Anyhow, the reading of that bill put the idea into my head that it might be interesting to contemplate customs and usages at different times. So many changes already in a century and a half or two centuries! And though the difference in customs might form the subject of a philosophical discussion, it might not be without interest simply to consider what our ancestors thought the best way of doing things and what *we* think *now* and which of us knows best. Unless, indeed, we find that there is really not much difference between us.

To do this, the apparent change in domestic economy, brought about by the new value of gold and silver, had best be left out of account. Only the thoughtless will laugh, when reading, for instance, that the nuns of Dordrecht, in the fourteenth century, dared to spend a whole penny at their yearly dinner and fared like princesses, for did they not spend just as much as they would now, if they received a general as a guest at their table? "Such a feast was long remembered in the convent," we read. All is relative in this world.

Our forefathers certainly divided the day, that is the twenty-four hours, in a fashion other than that to which we are accustomed. Oxenstiern, the chancellor, complains in one of his letters that the sun had been quicker in rising that day than he; the Grand Pensionary van der Goes, that, having overslept himself, he was not up before five o'clock; and Sully, first minister to Henry IV, was at work in his office and ready to receive callers at three o'clock in the morning. I am afraid that our departmental clerks nowadays are not to be found there quite so early.

As the stomach also had its wants and adapted itself to this division of the day, dinner was much earlier. Philip II and Queen Mary of England were at table as early as ten o'clock. Henry VIII and Francis I, when they met with so much pomp in the camp of Guines, also dined at that hour and on that occasion they did not get the common fare of every day as may be imagined; it was, no doubt, "*à la grandeur.*" But not long after this the hours seem to be getting later, for Sandoval tells us that the same Philip, after Mary's death, desiring her sister Elizabeth—who made a fool of him—for a wife, and wishing to please her by adopting modern ways, both in dress and habits, also dined later and with more ceremony. If the monster had dined still

longer or done nothing else but dine, he would not have troubled his century so much, nor have made our poor ancestors so unhappy. Those who love good cheer are rarely tyrants; it is the frugal, lean, shrivelled-up, gloomy princes that are dangerous. Let us speak of pleasanter things, however. Our good Father Cats [1] dined later already; he tells us that, in his house at Zorgvliet, it was noon before the soup was put on the table. But then he waited no longer, not even for Miss Schuurmans or the reverend Hondius. The latter, however, minded his time and preferred to be an hour too early rather than five minutes late. At that time the great Huigens had not yet had the fine road to Scheveningen made, and Cats had some of the same malmsey as was mentioned in the bill for my grandfather's wedding, but the latter only drank it at his wedding and *ad hoc,* while the knight gave it to the perspiring churchmen of the Hague, when they had walked over, all the way across the dunes, to have a chat with him.

Since that time, however, the hour for satisfying the hungry stomach has become much later still, and if Cats were now invited to dinner by people of good class, he might safely countermand his own supper, for this meal has now been pushed back in the same proportion. With poets, writers of weekly papers, and people of distinction, whose purses are not too well filled and who therefore declare that supper causes restless sleep, this meal is put off to the afternoon of the next day. This is a delightful invention and it seems that our forefathers, whose digestions bore the mark of coarse and rude health, did not dare to adduce such a reason. The evening meal was then served at a much earlier hour than now, however. We read that Catherine de Medici, after arranging with Charles IX and the Archbishop of Toulouse for the murder of the Protestants on the following St. Bartholomew's night, calmly supped and went to bed at eight o'clock, her usual hour for retiring. This princess was less afraid of a restless night than we authors are. Good heavens! a supper in one's stomach and the murder of a hundred thousand subjects in one's heart! . . .

But let the thought of this Medea not spoil the merry supper-parties of our ancestors, nor our own. It was now gradually becoming seven o'clock, before the great had their evening meal. When Hugo Grotius was presented to Henry IV, that good prince took so much interest in the conversation with that learned and then already famous child, that he talked with him till seven o'clock, his supper time. His Majesty could conveniently sup at that time and even earlier, if he liked, for the theatre, then in the Hotel de Bourgogne, had to start, at the order of the police, at two o'clock in the afternoon, doors being opened at one o'clock, and to be over at half past four, "as otherwise it was feared that it would not end till deep into the night."

[1] The poet Cats, popularly so called. *Translator's note.*

Not only was there a difference in the division of the day, but also in the social habits that belonged to it. The way in which the tables were loaded must seem quite as strange to us as the time when the meals took place. Soup, or broth, as it was then called, was hardly known, even in France, the country where it had its origin, or in Germany, where it was brought to perfection. In our country it was almost exclusively to be found in the sick-room. It is said of the North-Germans that, till far into last century, they used to put the animals that were to be eaten, no matter what their size, whole on the table. This must be boasting, however, for the use of plates and dishes had, already at that time, been customary, even in Westphalia, for more than a century, and surely a whole ox could not be put on any dish, not to mention the difficulty of cooking and carrying it. In lower Saxony, at banquets, it is even nowadays sometimes put on the table, cut up in quarters.

Tarts and pies are still the first things that present themselves to our minds, when we hear of a dinner where everything is as it should be. Tart especially was held in high esteem. It would have been as bad etiquette then to give a dinner without tart, as now to leave out coffee at the end of it. Everything made of sugar was much liked at that time. There was a taste of it in the meat, in the vegetables, in the gravies, in everything. Preserves were eaten by the spoonful from large dishes. Cake was not only plentifully eaten, but also carried home in large bags. When Burgomaster Tulp gave a banquet to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his coming into office and invited all the great people of Amsterdam, every guest, on leaving, was given a large dish-ful of sweetmeats. Fancy anyone being so thoughtful now! At dessert Japanese dishes filled with the best tobacco were carried round, every one filled his pipe and put the rest in his pouch. But what does all this prove? That tobacco and sugar were new and costly then, and that a person of importance had to show, on such an occasion, that he knew how things ought to be done and that he had the courage to spend lavishly. At present one would hardly dare to give such profusion of sugar and tobacco, even if one's guests were only the burgomaster's lackeys.

But that same good old Burgomaster Tulp, who looks so kind in his many portraits and who was, for his time, an exceedingly clever and learned man, is the cause, by offering tobacco so quickly, that we forgot to tell more of the dinner-parties of our forefathers. We went home with full bags, without having told what had been the food set on the table before this happy end. What appeared on his table that day has never been reported to us, through Mrs. Tulp having lost the bill of fare. All that is still known is that Professor Francius recited a Latin poem of his own composition between every course.

It is not mentioned whether these contained as many praises of the noble host and his guests, or of the dishes, pies, and sauces. Nowadays such poems would be considered strange interludes, and we do not advise our professors to try this method of making themselves agreeable at elegant dinner-parties, unless they do not mind being dismissed from the room with the screaming children. This much is sure that, at the said party, a huge pastry appeared, on which there was a peacock with outspread tail. But this kind of dish adorned all our grand old-fashioned banquets, as a passive contributor taking up the main position; the larger it was the better. A characteristic feature of a well-set table in those days was, that the height and circumference of the piled-up food made it impossible to see one's neighbours opposite. The prints still extant of dinners given to the Earl of Leicester and later to Maria de Medicis which are in the hands of collectors, confirm the report of this clumsy table-decoration. Three hares forming a pyramid with a number of pigeons, with, at the bottom, twelve partridges to form a foundation and the gaps filled with finches or other small game, was then considered a dish fit to be set before the king. Boileau, when describing his Parisian dinner, tells us of dishes containing enough to feed ourselves and some friends for a week. And to show how wanton waste accompanied this rude and useless display, we note out of many instances, only this from Brantôme, that Villequier, one of the courtiers of Henry IV, is said to have been the first to have an omelette served sprinkled with ground pearls!

It should, however, not be supposed that, even in the best families, the food eaten every day was in any proportion to the display made on special occasions. The farther one goes back to olden times, the more one finds that the pleasures of weeks and months were sacrificed to the superabundance of a single dinner. Here is still a criterion which can be applied in our days and it will soon show in how far, in our Dutch households, a good standard of social politeness has been reached. In families where they eat well every day and on special occasions somewhat better, there is a pleasant and easy tone. Where the table is sometimes princely, but usually poor, stiffness reigns. Some, for the rest well-situated families, in a part of our country that need not be mentioned, of whom it is told that they only cook a joint of meat on Sundays which has to last them for the rest of the week, remind us of the kitchen-orders for the table of Philip the Beautiful, in which it says that, in the evening, only two courses and one soup with bacon, and, at noon, the same, with one side-dish, must be put on the king's table. Rapin Thoiras also tells us that, one day, one of Charles VII's courtiers, who had apparently never been present at the king's dinner, having been admitted because he brought a message of great importance, was surprised to find his Majesty and the Queen sitting at table with only two skinny chickens and one sheep's tail in front of them.

It is no exaggeration to say that our present generation which, on occasion, gives feasts the like of which are not found anywhere in Europe and which, apart from other claims to glory, can pretend to a knowledge of how to order solemn banquets, can scarcely conceive the splendour of the festivities which formed a contrast to the frugal daily life of our forefathers. Side-boards of monstrous size loaded with dishes, vases, coolers, ewers, all made of gold; endless tables, where the eye wandered over an innumerable number and variety of dishes; decorations, statuettes, houses, ships, etc., artificially wound and set in motion, which, when run down, would burst and throw out incense or other perfumes, sugar or liqueurs; heralds at arms who, again and again, scattered gold and silver coins, from gold dishes, among the crowd; ceilings of dining-rooms opening and black clouds descending which, bursting to the accompaniment of claps of thunder, dissolved in a hail of sugar-sticks and a shower of rose-water perfuming the guests —these were the usual splendours displayed on great occasions. Though bearing the mark of enormous luxury, they could not lay claim to much taste. We might ask the guests at our dinner-tables, especially the ladies, whether their nerves and their modesty would not have been shocked if, as happened at the coronation of Charles VI, they had been served by knights on horseback, galloping round the tables and in this way pouring out the wines. François de Beaucaire tells us about these things in his *Commentaires* (starting in the year 1640) where he describes the entrance of Louise de Savoie in Milan and the ensuing banquet.

In order not to repeat ourselves, however, we leave to our readers, if they want to know more about this, the pleasure of looking it up in the work of the aforementioned author.

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NICOLAAS BEETS

The *Camera Obscura*, from which the following piece is taken, appeared in 1838. It has since gone into many editions, has been translated into foreign languages, and is still a favourite with the Dutch reading public. The title reminds one of Daguerre's contemporary invention. The author of this collection of humorous sketches and stories, Nicolaas Beets (1814-1903), concealed his identity under the pseudonym of "Hildebrand." He was a young theologian who, in 1839, had just finished his studies at the Leyden University. He had been a diligent contributor to the *Student's Almanack*, in which the humorous style was cultivated. In 1874 he became professor of theology at Utrecht.

This essay has been specially translated for the present collection by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt.

A MENAGERIE

NO, I will not go to a menagerie. I don't want to. Do not tell me that it is interesting; that one ought to have seen it; that one cannot go into society without being able at least to say something good or something bad of the locks, the whiskers, and the courage of the owner, of the lama, the lighting of the tent, and the two tigers in one cage. Do not say that one ought to have seen at least one accident "almost happen" and have watched a particularly picturesque attitude of some monster or other, at a moment when "no one else was looking"; do not tell me that one ought to see how the fruits of the tireless angler's toil are gobbled up in one moment by the greedy pelicans, and how the boa constrictor swallows a buck, horns and all, in a minute; do not say that one should be able to tell an anecdote of the cassowary, be witty about the monkeys, and have one's *qui pro quo* on the bears. To all this I answer: I hate a menagerie, and I will explain to you the reason of my loathing.

A menagerie! Do you know what that is? A collection you say, of objects of natural history, as important to the zoologist as . . . "As to the lover of animals," you were going to say? No, "as to every human being who takes an interest in knowing his fellow-creatures in this wide world of ours!" You are right, but then I should like to see my fellow-creatures as they are represented in the first picture of every illustrated Bible, nicely grouped, all in their natural attitudes: the lion with uplifted fore-paw as if just going to roar, the cockatoo looking down from a branch, as if to examine the colour of Adam's hair, and not, I beseech you, in those horrid iron swings in eternal motion. The boa should be coiled round a tree in the distance, in beautiful, seductive curves, looking up to the fatal apple; the eagle soaring high in the sky, a scarcely perceptible point—better to be quite imperceptible than as I see him in the menageries. I should be pleased and interested to see them like this. But here in these close, narrow cages, behind thick bars, in that slavish, defenceless, anxious attitude. . . . Oh, a menagerie is a prison, a home for the old, a monastery full of emaciated monks, a hospital, a bedlam filled with idiots.

You have never seen a lion. You imagine to yourself a majestic creature, an ideal of strength, grandeur, dignity, and courage; a being full of fury restrained by self-control; the king of animals. In imagination you are in the desert of Barbary. It is a night in the bad season. The sky is dark, the clouds are thick and rush wildly past the moon, which rends them again and again to send down a watery beam. The wind howls in the mountains, the rain gushes down; in the distance growls the thunder. Do you see that huge mass covered with thick

bushes outlined against the sky? Can you distinguish in it that dark chasm, yawning below, the top of which is hidden in thistles and underwood? There is a flash of lightning. Look, there! Nothing but impenetrable darkness. But what is that? It is the glitter of two eyes like live coals. Listen! That was not the thunder, it was a hoarse roar—the sound made by a waking lion. He stands up in his den, he stretches himself. A moment he pauses with raised head. He shakes his dark mane. One leap! Behind your watch-fire, quick, imprudent one! Hungrily he prowls about, roaring terribly. Who will be his victim? Perhaps a broad-shouldered buffalo awaiting his attack with lowered head and strong horns. He will rush at him, fasten his nails into his loins, bury his strong fangs in the short wrinkled neck; in a moment he will have killed him, torn him to pieces, and satisfied his hunger. Then you will see him lie down calmly, with red mouth and bespattered mane, enjoying his victory, proud of his kingship.

Well, this king of animals, this terror of the desert, this ferocious, furious creature, is here. This is the antechamber of his palace—this room, open in front, looking like a mixture of a drawing-room, an office, and a picture-show. This herald holding a peeled willow-branch in his hand, invites you to enter. His Majesty is sitting in audience. His Majesty is to be seen for money. His Majesty's lady-in waiting raises the curtains. You are in his Majesty's presence. Do not trouble to get pale; the king is sure to receive you kindly. But be careful, do not bump against this . . . what is it, a trunk? Oh, no, it is a box full of serpents; poor pythons! This way! Mind that lamp. Step across that pail, the pond for the pelican, the bath of the polar bear. Here we are. On that carriage-frame, in the red cage, six feet high and six feet across, he lies. Yes, it is he, I assure you it is he. His feet are sticking out between the bars; these are lion's claws. His tail, that scourge, fits into the right angle of his abode. He is sleepy, he growls. Could we make him get up? "Nero, Nero!" "It is forbidden to touch the animals, especially with canes." Do you realize the humiliation of that notice? Therein lies all his defencelessness. He might be hurt! Has the lion still got his prestige? Have you your illusions still? Are you still afraid of that bugbear? Do you still believe in the description of him? Do you not say: "Let him come if he can"? Poor dethroned king! Shrunken giant! See how carefully he moves, he is afraid to knock his head, to hurt his mouth, to crush his tail. What distinguishes him now from any tame animal? And is there much difference between him and the cowardly hyena, the violator of cemeteries; or the spotted tiger, that serpent on four legs, attacking from behind; or the wolf that a strong Cossack can whip to death; or the odious mandril, the clown of the collection; or all the horrid monkeys that amuse people so much? They are all locked up. the king as well as the servant, the king only more so.

Do not imagine you see him in his natural dimensions. This cage makes him look smaller; he has shrunk more than a foot. His face is old, his eyes are dull, he looks stupid; it is a seedy lion. Do you think he has still got claws? Sad spectacle! A sick soldier; a grenadier with his rifle and arms, his bearskin cap and moustaches, in a sentry-box; Samson with his hair cut off; Napoleon in St. Helena. If, standing in this tent with the curtains and valances, the iron bars, the carriage-frames and the wild animals, you cast your eye on all these humiliated creatures, do not imagine then that you are seeing lions, tigers, vultures, eagles, hyenas, and bears. The children of the desert would despise and disown their relations if they saw them here. Put that pencil and sketch-book in your pocket, artist. Make no sketches here. These are not wild animals, only decayed remnants of them, broken in body and spirit. They no longer express their natural disposition. The lion has died in the lion, the tiger in the tiger. Your drawing would be like a portrait of a dead body. You might as well take a *petit maître* of our century as a model of one of his Germanic forefathers, or draw a mummy and say: "This is an Egyptian." You could hardly distinguish their forms or estimate their proportions under the shadows cast by these square cages. How could you guess their characteristic attitudes? They are like plants in a cellar, they pine away, they are in a sad apathy, in a gloomy lethargy. They have been slowly dying for months. The light troubles them. They look dull, stupefied.

Hush, there is the owner. Hear how they roar; they are going to be fed. It is time for the wild animals' supper. Grim mockery! Their supper! The gaoler will bring to every one of these state prisoners his daily allowance. "Ah yes, but he will tease them and for a moment you will see them in their strength." Woe to us if this were true! No, it is a show. They are humiliated by being turned into play-actors. Theirs is the anger of the operatic hero, of the offended father in the vaudeville. It is imitation. It is the half-past-seven fury—the rattling of the shackles, as the prisoner gets up to take his food and water. Also in the roar of the lion, the howling of the wolves there is a *pectus quod disertum facit*. Do not imagine that they would condescend to waste their eloquence on that menial who, anyway, in the end, has to put the carefully weighed piece of meat into their mouths.

Their supper! Oh, if they could, they would demand their supper in the desert, instead of these poor meagre rations of charity. You weaklings, who bake your bread and cook your meat, in order to be able to digest them, if you were invited to witness that meal, to see how they tear the smoking flesh from the broad bones and pounce on it with strong, powerful movements, roaring with pleasure, not because they are eating, but because they are killing—how your hair

would stand on end, how this cutter and distributor of meat, how the whole army of visitors would shake and shudder!

The most unbearable creature in all the menagerie to me is the guide. You laugh perhaps at his vile French and still viler Dutch, at his eternally repeated sentences. I cannot laugh; he irritates me.

Sire, ce n'est pas bien,
Sur le lion mourant vous lâchez votre chien.

For shame! he calls the tiger "monsieur" and the lioness "madame." He tells jokes at their expense, they are the dupes of the witty stories he has learned by heart. If only they could, would not they be revenged on the wag! Would not "monsieur" quarter him and "madame" tear him to pieces! And deservedly so. He treats animals as if they were objects. His reward is a stupid smile from one and a tip from another. He robs you of the beautiful symbol of maternal love that you saw in the pelican and prefers to make a night-cap of its lower jaw. Wretched joker, slandering with impunity, mocking his betters! With his stick and his moustaches he struts about and plays the hero among the poor prisoners.

It is a dreadful bore to have to show a distant cousin, or a half-forgotten friend who is your guest, the Leyden Museum. Instead of looking at the pretty girls in Broad Street you have to stroll with him, on a sunny morning, from one hall into another, seeing nothing but natural history, in an atmosphere as cold as if you were in a cellar. But if it comes to seeing strange animals, I would rather see them here than there. Rather a museum than a menagerie. It is true the charnel-house that you have first to wander through, takes away a great deal of the illusion. Like all analysis, anatomy is detrimental to poetry. But stuffed animals are not humiliated. Here they do not sleep and snore. Here they do not die, but are dead. Here we see no dullness, no sluggishness, no laziness, but only coldness and insensibility. Here you are in their underworld: you see their shades, their outlines, their εἴδωλα! Their material covering, their attitude, and their bearing may have lost a little, owing to stuffing and artificial treatment, but their souls—you believe, don't you, that animals have souls?—are not numbed or maimed here. Not mean cupidity, but noble science has collected them. They are not on show, they are there for your instruction. Their names are mentioned in respectful Latin. In silence one passes along their rows, with all the awe one feels for the dead.

But a menagerie. . . .

Oh, ye lords of creation! I do not know if, in the nineteenth century of our era, and so far removed from paradise, you still deserve that name, but you like to hear it, you pride yourself on it. Oh, ye lords

of creation! Show your power then in the animal kingdom, among the possessors of fangs, claws, hoofs, and horns. Rule, force, command, overpower, dispose; put your citadel on the backs of elephants, your load on the necks of buffaloes; set your teeth in the ears of onagers, shoot your lead into the foreheads of tigers and turn their skins into housings for your horses. Conquer the world like a Cæsar and, like a Cæsar, make four lions pull your triumphal car. It is well. But do not abuse your strength. Do not mock, torture, humiliate, extinguish. Let there be no prison, no cell, no scaffold, no pillory, no revolving cage, no menagerie. Do not play this horribly cruel game with them. If you must have a game, then restore the decaying Coliseum, turn it into an arena, and be generous enough, at least, to let your equals fight them. Amuse yourself—if you have not had enough of barbaric pleasures yet—with their strength, their courage, their heroic end; not with their slavery, their degeneration, their nostalgia, their pining away with consumption.

* * *

C. B. HUET

Coenraad Busken Huet (1826-1886) wrote, besides a good deal of literary criticism, a much discussed novel called *Lidewyde*. His essays have found many admirers, both on account of their style and their contents. Huet was, for some years, a clergyman in Haarlem, but gave up his clerical work to become the editor of the Haarlem newspaper. He spent some years of his life in Java and later settled in Paris. The *Litterarische Fantasien*, from which this essay is taken, was published by H. D. Tjeenk Willink, at Haarlem in 1885, and has been specially translated for the present volume by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt.

THOMAS CARLYLE

I

I VIVIDLY remember the impression which, when the mail arrived in Batavia, in the last days of 1870, Carlyle's letter in the London *Times* of November 18 made on me. It contained his unsolicited opinion on the Franco-German War.

We had still in our ears the reverberation of Victor Hugo's manifests—of the apocalyptic prose in which the French seer declared himself to have become a wall of the besieged Paris. And behold, there came from the other side of the Channel another prophet, as venerable on account of his years and glory, who flung his anathema

in apocalyptic prose in the face of the same Paris. Carlyle sided with Germany; he thought it a good thing that France should be humiliated; he pleaded the cause of passively watching Europe.

I remind my readers of this only to prove Carlyle's greatness as an author. Possessing more philosophy and historical knowledge than the seventy-year-old Hugo, Carlyle at seventy-five was a similar phenomenon. He was as highly esteemed by his compatriots. Like Hugo he was the apostle of a self-made gospel. In turn lyrical and satirical, always a preacher of repentance, he seemed to be elder brother to his French contemporary. If we could imagine Hugo as praising Germany at the expense of France, no inner literary criticism would prevent us from considering him the writer of Carlyle's letter to the *Times*.

In it Carlyle predicts that not the French but the German race will now take the lead in Europe and from this he expects better consequences, worse being hardly conceivable. In eighty-one years, he says, France has accomplished nothing and less than nothing. Its prophets have prophesied vanities, its people walk in darkness. A people and its prophets, far advanced in deceit and self-deception, are so deep in error that they take lies for the truth. Even now, in their utmost distress, conceit and empty heroics seem their only support. They believe themselves to be heroic by nature; they consider themselves the Christ of nations—an innocent, devout people, suffering for the sins of other nations in order to deliver them all.

Let us hope that it will remain the *ne plus ultra* of that Christ of nations. They had better ask whether, in our days, there ought not to be a Cartouche of nations. Cartouche possessed many a knightly virtue, was much admired and much pitied during his suffering and, when the inexorable and inevitable gallows was erected, many beautiful ladies asked for a lock of his hair. Yet no rescue is forthcoming for Cartouche! He had better obey the strong fist of the German law-officer who has him by the throat. Let him give up part of the stolen goods, cease being a Cartouche, and try to become a true knight. Let him endeavour to be a blessing to his neighbours rather than the reverse, as he is now. In any case it is quite natural that Europe does not come to the rescue, strange as this may seem to France, who expects it to be grateful for the heavenly light it has received from her. And even if it came to the rescue, it could not now prevent the strong Chancellor from having his way. Metz—the fence against the malevolent—can now scarcely be taken from him.

To quote these pages is at the same time to point to Carlyle's inconsistency. According to his system he ought to have hailed Voltaire—the father of the French Revolution in 1789—as a hero, and that Revolution itself as an event as sublime and of as serious warning as the English Revolution in 1688. But all his life Carlyle remained too much of a preacher to acknowledge the necessity and fairness of this conclusion.

Odin and Mohammed, Dante and Shakespeare, Luther and Knox, Rousseau, Johnson, and Burns, Cromwell and Napoleon are all Heroes to him. Of Voltaire, however, he says: "We find no heroism of character in him, from first to last; nay, there is not, that we know of, *one great thought in all, six and thirty quartos.*"

If Carlyle hails the Ironsides as redeemers of mankind then why not the Septembriseurs? He could see greatness only when his fancy, which was often arbitrary, could give it a biblical tinge. Colourless ideals, on the other hand, such as the abstract ideas of justice which had caused the Revolution of 1789, left him cold or irritated him. We cannot help smiling when he points out that the French are pre-eminently the People—Cartouche. Alsace and Lorraine are trifles in comparison with the pearls stolen from Queen Victoria's crown.

The roguish note in the letter to the *Times* and in many another page of Carlyle's writings may easily give a wrong idea of his real nature. At bottom his character was not humorous but tragic, in accordance with his fate and the manner of his life. For more than half a century Carlyle, from the depth of a serious conviction, fought a hopeless battle against the spirit of his day and of his country, defending truth against appearances, the sublime against the commonplace, poetry against prose. Many a storm he braved in his Scottish mountains, and wilder than the storm overhead was that in his heart. Ungrateful people! The stupid great! The vain wealthy! Vindictive pedants! Owls who cannot even follow the eagle in its flight! . . .

Thus considered, Carlyle at eighty-six is like the old king in the tragedy, accusing wind and lightning, the rattling thunder and the down-pouring rain of plotting with his evil daughters against him, but later again, in his raving, acquitting them of all complicity. The grey Carlyle in his wrath powerless against the spirit of the time—Carlyle, the preacher of repentance and the martyr of a conviction doomed to perish, calls to mind the grand and touching drama of Shakespeare that fills us with reverent pity:

> Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
> You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
> Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
> You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
> Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
> Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
> Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
> Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once
> That make ingrateful man! . . .
> Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!
> Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
> I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
> I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
> You owe me no subscription: then let fall

> Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
> A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
> But yet I call you servile ministers,
> That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
> Your high-engender'd battles, 'gainst a head
> So old and white as this. Oh, oh, 'tis foul!

It is not only *my* imagination which lends to Carlyle the features of that ragged, half-insane king of almost prehistoric times, in that terrible night on the heath. He himself was conscious that he was an uncouth being from an early world, a rhinoceros of the west, an unlicked bull of old Germanic forests; "such a bemired *auerochs* of the German woods." By preference he depicts wild scenery. His best colours are reserved for a sunset at the North Cape.

> Silence as of death . . . nothing but the granite cliffs ruddy-tinged, the peaceable gurgle of that slow-heaving Polar Ocean, over which in the utmost North the great Sun hangs low and lazy, as if he too were slumbering. Yet in his cloud-couch wrought of crimson and cloth-of-gold; yet does his light stream over the mirror of waters, like a tremulous fire-pillar, shooting downwards to the abyss, and hide itself under my feet. In such moments Solitude also is invaluable; for who would speak, or be looked at, when behind him lies all Europe and Africa, fast asleep, except the watchmen; and before him the silent Immensity, and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our Sun is but a porch-lamp?

Carlyle's nature reminds one not only of King Lear but also of the Caledonian songs of Ossian. His idealistic philosophy likes to think of human beings as of shadows. "So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night on Heaven's mission, APPEARS." Not only are men destined to become spirits after death: in life they are spirits. All these quotations are from *Sartor Resartus:*

> Like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a god-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane, haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. . . . But whence?—O Heaven whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not: only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

> "We *are such stuff*
> As dreams are made of, and our little Life
> Is rounded with a sleep!"

II

Carlyle's ideas are reminiscent, on the practical side, of some of the thoughts of Comte de Saint-Simon, the founder of the sect of the Saint-

Simonians; his style of that of Johann Georg Hamann, surnamed the "Magus of the North." Goethe, who liked Hamann, compared his works to the sibylline books, which are only consulted when the need of an oracle is felt. Lavater, another admirer, also to a certain extent a kindred spirit, felt Hamann's skull and pronounced it to be an archipelago, the parts of which undeniably belonged together, but could only be reached by boat. Jean Paul called Hamann "deep as the starry sky with its mysterious nebulae, which no created eye can decipher." In Herder among his contemporaries the most extensive reference to Hamann is found. Grateful for the stimulating effect Hamann had on him, he says:

> The philologist has read and re-read much and with judgment; but the delicate aroma of the table of the ancients has been mixed by him with Gallic vapours and exudations of British humour, and the lot of these have enveloped him in a fog, which never clears away, whether he chastises like indignant Juno on catching her husband in adultery, or prophesies like the dying priestess of Apollo's oracle at Delphi.[1]

Not only do these statements almost literally apply to the form of Carlyle's works, but, at the same time, they afford us an insight in the German world and authors that gave him his clue. Hamann should not be judged by the verdict of Gervinus, who could not stand such literature. More reliable is the opinion of his compatriots who, acknowledging that his style was bad, full of far-fetched paradoxes, references bewildering even to himself, and of obscure expressions, yet remember that, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, Hamann was the first to distinguish genuine poetry from mechanical rhyming. It is to Carlyle's limited but eternal credit that he assimilated, with all the enthusiasm of his youth, this beautiful German life, added to it his own deep and wonderful philosophy, and transplanted this blossoming garden to the flat sandy heath that was the English life of his day. It is scarcely necessary to ask what led Carlyle, about 1825, to find his own nostalgia in this German world of fifty years before, and to take pleasure in being an English *"Magus im Norden."* At the bottom of his heart Carlyle, like Byron, felt nothing but disgust for the society of his day. The last two cantos of *Childe Harold* and, more especially, *Don Juan* make us understand this feeling. *Don Juan* is a satire, made more caustic by a sense of personal grievance. It was hard for Byron to be crucified by his compatriots after having been received so recently with plaudits. It was hard to have to endure his

[1] These quotations are from Gildemeester's great work on Hamann, 1857-64, 5 vol. See also Brömel, *Hamann, ein Litteraturbild des vorigen Jahrhunderts*, 1870; Disselhof, *Wegweiser zu Hamann*, 1870; Carvacki, *Biografische Erinnerungen an Hamann*, 1855; Moritz Petri, *Hamann Schriften und Briefe*, 1872. *The Complete Works of Hamann* appeared in 1821-1843. Heinrich Long emphasizes his importance in: *Ein Gang durch die Christliche Welt*, 18th letter.

wife's slanders, and the envy of his fellow-poets. Nevertheless, we cannot think that Byron acted generously in stigmatizing his own country as the home of hypocrisy and in unmasking men who, at the time, were considered great. He himself was, at all events, too little of a saint to judge of the hypocrisy of others. But all the same there lies so much truth at the bottom of his exaggerated accusations, there is such a noble, healthy loathing of all forms of cant in his satires, and the fine touching poetry of them so much enhances their force, that the youthful Carlyle, seven years younger than Byron, must have been deeply moved by this great and imperishable fruit of modern English literature. Carlyle probably resolved never to err as Byron had erred. He thanked heaven, perhaps, that his humble birth, limited means, and his love of study protected him from temptations which had proved too strong for the poet. I should not wonder if he indignantly turned away his head from the Byron of Venice and Aretino. A lover of Burns could only have qualified admiration for Byron. But two things were certain: the England of those days was governed by a spirit of untruthfulness, and Byron alone—the outcast, despised and misjudged—took up arms against this spirit. All hands were against him, his hand was against all.

If Carlyle had written poetry and Byron had been the junior, we might think that the eighty-second stanza of the fourteenth canto of *Don Juan* was taken from Carlyle.

The poet is angry with the faithless sovereigns of the Holy Alliance who, after Napoleon's fall, tried to lay the same yoke on the peoples of Europe again from which the French Revolution had delivered them. He wishes that the crowned rulers themselves might taste the bitterness of slavery and, with one of the quick turns of imagination common to him, he addresses the famous apostle of the slaves. Similar ingenious sallies are very frequently found in Carlyle:

> O Wilberforce! thou man of black renown,
> Whose merit none enough can sing or say,
> Thou hast struck one immense colossus down,
> Thou moral Washington of Africa!
> But there's another little thing I own,
> Which you should perpetrate some summer's day,
> And set the other half of earth to rights:
> You have freed the *blacks*—now pray shut up the whites!

The social rampart stormed by Carlyle is the specifically English utilitarianism of Bentham. It is a system of flat, dull, economical philosophy, taking for its watchword the untaxed breakfast-table and the consideration of a certain degree of material welfare as the highest national ideal. Wherever Carlyle comes across this practical materialism, he satirizes it. His ideal is not Byron's abstract political liberty, but the poetry of his own puritanical faith. He does not go

to Italy to find the weapons with which to fight the spirit of the time, as Byron, Shelley, and Landor had done, but to the native country of Hamann and his admirers. His thesis, a translation of *Wilhelm Meister,* was followed by studies of Schiller and other German poets of the end of the eighteenth century. He was the first to make England acquainted with Novalis. Up the Jacob's ladder of German poetry he climbs to the secrets of German philosophy and finds, in Fichte's idealism, the means to supply his Heidelberg catechism with a new metaphysical foundation. Meanwhile he has made the acquaintance of Goethe and has found in him his great "Hero."

Strange weapons for a defender of the Calvinistic creed, no matter how sublimated! But no other would have been so suitable. Whoever, at that time, wanted metaphysical ideas to take root in English brains, had to adhere to the conceptions of the Church. He had also to surprise by his depth and to charm by his poetic flight. All this Carlyle could do. If, after the publication of his enigmatic *Sartor Resartus,* he himself—like the figures described in his study *On Heroes*—became a demi-god to the English; if they honoured him like a king in the realm of thought and chose him in preference to Disraeli to succeed Gladstone as Lord Rector of the Edinburgh university, if such a famous man as Stuart Mill prided himself on having been the first to see the beauties of the *History of the French Revolution* and thought he could find no higher praise for Woman, whom he greatly honoured, than by putting her above Carlyle—it is not because Carlyle really introduced a new philosophical system or promoted the study of scientific historical investigation, but because, with staunch faith in his ideals, he raised the banner of enthusiasm and poetry, in opposition to the nineteenth century and its ideal of the free breakfast-table. It was he who preserved the English nation from the worship of mediocrity, and who, by the aid of German literature and philosophy, put new life into the spiritless, prosaic English politics, historical insight, morality, criticism, and biblical faith of the time. (This latter no Spurgeon could have done.) His compatriots and contemporaries respected in him the representative of a higher conception of life than that which they had inherited from the preceding generation, and, full of admiration for his genius, they allowed themselves to be admonished by him to change their ways.

III

To get a good conception of Carlyle as a moralist and as a writer of ingenious homilies it is helpful to think of the famous parable which Count de Saint-Simon published in 1819. The difference between the systems of the two men must be left out of account, however.

Suppose that in one night there died in Paris: the fifty foremost physicists, chemists, mathematicians, physiologists, poets, painters, sculptors, musicians and literary men; also the fifty foremost mechanicians, engineers, architects, artillerists, etc.; the fifty foremost doctors, surgeons, pharmaceutists, navigators, clockmakers, and bankers; the two hundred best merchants, the fifty foremost managers of blast-furnaces and brass-foundries, manufacturers of arms, tanners, bricklayers, carpenters, cabinet-makers, smiths, locksmiths, etc., etc. France would then by one blow, be bereft of the flower of its manhood, of the producers of its prosperity. It would suddenly go down in rank below other nations. It would take a whole generation to make up for such a loss. Suppose, however, that France kept all these men, but there died in one night: Monsieur, the king's brother, the Duke of Angoulême, the Duke of Berry, the Duke of Orleans, the Duke of Bourbon, the Duchess of Angoulême, the Duchess of Berry, the Duchess of Orleans, the Duchess of Bourbon, and the Honourable Mademoiselle de Condé! Suppose France lost in that same night all the grand-officers of the crown, all the ministers of state with or without a portfolio, all the privy councillors, all the members of the audit-office, all its marshals, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, vicar-generals, and canons, its prefects, all the chief officials of the departments, all the judges and ten thousand of the richest *rentiers*. Such a disaster would certainly distress France for the French are a kind-hearted people. But to the state the loss would not be very great. There are many Frenchmen who could, quite as well as Monsieur, play the part of brother to the king or take the task upon them of the Duke of Angoulême or the Duke of Berry. The antechambers of the palace are full of courtiers, of applicants for posts at court or in the state. In a word the loss could easily be repaired. And yet all these people, the loss of whom would be unimportant to the state, take precedence of the productive members, even when they do wrong, for they adhere to existing things and do their best to continue the priority of conjectural theories over positive ones.

Indeed, in France, the world is turned upside down. The social body is not healthy. The poor are forced to be generous for the benefit of the rich. *Les voleurs-généraux*, those who unlawfully appropriate the bulk of the income of the state, are supposed to protect the state against the lesser criminals. The task of the incapable is to guide and rule the capable.

This is the manner of Carlyle. There is nothing petty in Carlyle's sallies at men and things. Though he spares no one he is never personal. His attacks are aimed at institutions, at his century, his country, his people. Had he been a Dutchman living in our time and had he, instead of addressing English youth, as he did on some occasions, spoken to our young men he would have said something like this:

"Sturdy youths, whatever you want to become, do not become members of the second Chamber! It is a national club-table whence by means of stenographers, five millions, chiefly imbeciles, are harangued. Do you wish to know the name of the murderer of all human virtue, the secret strangler of truthfulness and diligence, and of enthusiasm and

energy? His name is 'parliamentary orator.' Do not appeal then to the vulgarians with their long ears and ministerial seats; do not address them, hate them, send them away. Be silent and work; or, if there is no work for you to do, be silent and suffer and appeal to the gods, who have better things in store for you than ministerial seats.

"Am I to fear that it is your ambition to become a minister, perhaps a chairman of a ministry? Alas, the Dutch government is no government of *sans culottes;* it is too respectable. But culotted in whatsoever way, it is a no-government. The first best can become a president-minister. A lackey throws a piece of orange-peel out of the window of the cabinet; it hits a passer-by and he is the premier. And why not? After some swimming-lessons, with a number of pig-bladders around him, he will hold his own as well as so many others did before him. Once more, be silent and work, or be silent and suffer, but beware of pig-bladders and pig-philosophy.

"If the pigs (those with four legs I mean) could speak and would express their opinion with regard to the universe and to life, the chief points of their observations would be these:

"'*Primo.* The universe is a huge trough, full of hog-wash, a mixture of solids and liquids and other incongruous things which may be distinguished as within reach and out of reach—the latter to the majority of pigs.

"'*Secundo.* Moral evil consists in not being able to reach the wash; moral good consists in being able to reach it.

"'*Tertio.* Paradise, formerly much discussed, must have been a place where the wash was always good and plentiful, no matter how many pigs there were.

"'*Quarto.* It has always been the endeavour of all pigs to increase the quantity of hog-wash within reach and to decrease that out of reach. Theory and practice have aimed at this only. Science, religion, enthusiasm among pigs have no other purpose. This is the summary of all the virtues of pigs.

"'*Quinto.* Veritable pigs' poetry consists in the praise of hog-wash; also in lauding those pigs whose troughs look clean or who show by grunting that they have eaten enough.

"'*Sexto.* The pig is a natural barometer; every good pig knows the signs of the times and from what side the wind blows.

"'*Septimo.* Who created pigs? Unknown. Probably the pork-butcher.

"'*Octavo.* There is justice in Pigdom. The feeling of indignation, the desire for retribution is not strange to pigs and sometimes appears when one treads on another's toes. Then there is considerable sacrifice of life and property and of excellent hog-wash. Therefore we are pleased to possess laws, say the pigs, so that wasting hog-wash may be prevented as much as possible and that justice may be maintained.

"'*Nono.* What is justice? Justice is taking care that *you* get *your* share from the trough and *I mine.*

"'*Decimo.* But what is my share? Opinions on that differ among pigs themselves. My share, grunt some, is as much as I can get without being hanged or put into prison.'

"Beware of those ten commandments, virtuous youths, and all the more so when your country is in a condition which only too much encourages the inclination to adopt pig-philosophy. Holland's genius no longer soars to the sun with the world at his feet, like an eagle in a storm, as your greatest poet visualized him in the flourishing period of the republic. Holland's genius has become a greedy ostrich, thinking of his own safety, who turns his back on the sun and hides his head in the bushes of royal cloaks and clergymen's gowns or whatever else he may find of second-hand shop garments. This metamorphosis has very slowly been accomplished, but we see now that it was inevitable and also what the end will be. No ostrich with his stomach full of pebbles and his head hidden away in the bushes, but will one day be hit in that back which is the sign-board of his philosophy."

We never understand Carlyle better than when, in this way, (the above has been almost literally copied from *Cromwell's Letters* and from two of the *Latterday Pamphlets*) we put ourselves in the place of the particular public he perhaps too little lost sight of. Carlyle can be translated, albeit not with all his peculiarities of style. Essays may be written on him. But to understand him completely we must in our own history, our own social conditions, and our own ways of thinking, seek for equivalents and apply them to what he says.

What wealth of thought! What clearness of vision! What a gift to move his readers! How cleverly he contrives, by choosing trifling or contemptible things as images—the pig, the ostrich, the bit of orange-peel—to create scorn in the mind of his reader or, unconsciously, to make him shrug his shoulders. It seems to me that Carlyle has served the young in particular among his countrymen, by thus taking the side of unobserved sterling qualities against loud, frivolous fame. "Be silent and work, or be silent and suffer, if you find no work to do for the moment, and appeal to the gods!" All the same this preaching strikes us as somewhat strange from a man who was far from silent himself. However, we know what he means and respect him for his noble advice.

It seems astonishing that a man who, as a rule in a cynical form, told his fellow-countrymen such hard, bitter truths, was not only not cast out by them as a slanderer and a renegade, but was worshipped almost as a saint; and where he was not, his wrath was at least respected and he was left in peace. A striking difference between this and the way Byron was treated. England would probably have forgiven Byron in the end, after *Cain* and even after *Don Juan,* if he had not offended puritanical feelings. To mention "old rum" and "true piety" in one

breath as the best means to calm uneasy minds was too much. Carlyle never became so flippant. On the contrary, he always respected religion when he poured out scorn and derision upon the English nation. His sarcasms spring from a loving heart. His enemies have called him a clown and a quack. They have drawn him, wrapped in a wizard's cloak strewn with stars, with a pointed hat and a divining-rod in his hand. But no one has ever doubted that the mysticism that lay in the depths of his being was sincere. He possessed reverence, hence he was forgiven much. The old preacher of repentance was honoured, because of his extensive knowledge, his poetic mind and style, and because he was acknowledged to be the torch-bearer of modern speculative philosophy. But still more was he honoured, because of his likeness to a Hebrew prophet. With the exception of Shakespeare, no writer in England has ever been so popular.

* * *

ALBERT VERWEY

ALBERT VERWEY, who was born in 1865, was one of the enthusiastic young writers of the literary revival of 1880. Their organ was the *Nieuwe Gids*. Later he edited his own paper, *De Beweging*, to which most of his brother poets and followers contributed. At present Mr. Verwey is professor of literature in the University of Leyden.

This essay has been specially translated for this volume by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt., and is used by the author's permission.

THE HODJA NASR-EDDIN

A VIRTUOSO OF THE APPARENT

NASR-EDDIN'S amusing stories found in the best-known collection of the Turks, lead me to draw the attention of those who take an interest in such popular tales, to the fact that together they form a unity and that their composer is a personality.

Those who study popular traditions mostly try to trace a particular custom, legend, or tale, in the same or in a different form, to the past of various races and, besides the satisfaction derived from the success of their investigations, they find their pleasure in strengthening the feeling of inner and outer community among the scattered dwellers on this earth. But, of course, they generally direct their attention to parts, for, as a rule, a single fact, or more rarely a series of facts, repeats itself in a more or less similar way.

Not a collection of tales, but a single tale from a collection is found here and there, and however pleasant it may have been to myself, for

instance, to find that the Kabyles too have their big Claus and little Claus, I cannot regard with unqualified approval a method of research which, at least on one occasion, led to the breaking of the evident unity of the *Iliad*. Forty years ago, shortly after the appearance of a German translation of this work, a German scholar directed his scrutinizing eye to it. In Eiffel and Taunus, on the Neckar and the Main, in Schleswig and Littauen, among the Spaniards and the Italians, nay among Indians and Tamulians, he found related stories. What happened after this defies description. No longer than eight years ago an Algerian professor, with dazzling lucidity, collected the most scattered relations from Basque chasms and Celtic recesses in Brittany, and united them with a newly-found great multitude of desert-dwellers. An inexhaustible Hungarian the other day . . . but I believe that, without detriment to my purpose, I may confess that I do not understand Hungarian.

This much is certain: on parts of Nasr-Eddin's book of jests much has been written, but hardly anything on the whole of it. And yet, as a whole, it is very remarkable, first of all, because it is the favourite book of the Turks, and secondly, as it gives the delineation of the personality of the Hodja—partly priest, partly rural teacher, preaching, instructing, and pronouncing judgment; a fictitious personage probably of Arabic origin, but who, as we see him in this book, became a Turkish popular hero. Not through the component parts which have long lain scattered for every one to make use of, but through the personality of the composer which unites them, this book is the revelation of an author who must have possessed the qualities of his hero and who lives in our memory, though his name died with him.

The Hodja in the East presents some points of similarity to Owlglass in the West. He has indeed, conveniently but, as a German scholar observed, wrongly, been called the Turkish Owlglass. This scholar has, however, proved himself unable to characterize him better than as a genuine fool, a mixture of unlimited silliness and stupidity, of wit and banter. The French translator of whose work I have made use, solves the problem more easily still, saying that Nasr-Eddin's jests form a kind by itself, the "*genre plaisant*." A little farther on he says of the Hodja that he unites in himself: "*MM. de Crac et de la Palisse, Cadet-Roussel, Michel Morin, M. Bonasse, Calino, et toutes les autres individualités imaginaires qui se partagent en France le domaine des joyeusetés, naïves et railleuses.*"

There is one thing that clearly appears from this: whether he is looked upon as a German fool or a French clown, he takes up, with his usually harmless fun, a position opposite to Owlglass with his malicious mockery. And to accentuate this contrast I will go further and say that, opposed to Owlglass, arisen from the passionate brooding Germanic mind—the same mind from which also the Gothic cathedrals

arose—stands the Hodja produced by the much more intellectually refined mind of the Mussulman, the mind that produced the Alhambra. Owlglass and the Hodja are extremes. The warm German heart has made the one, the dexterous Mohammedan brain the other. The jests of the Hodja, though, like every jest having a side of mockery, satire, vengeance, and moralizing, are in their nature nothing but the play of high intelligence.

To realize what this difference means one may compare Owlglass's dealing with the tailors with Nasr-Eddin's appearance before the believers. The greater part of the former story consists in the solemn ceremony with which the tailors are summoned. From all parts, from Holstein, Pomerania, Stettin, Mecklenburg, Lubeck, and Hamburg, from The Sound and Wismar they are invited by convocations to the meeting of Rostock. There, when they had met, Owlglass would teach them a trick which would be useful to them and their offspring, while the world lasted. After many letters and messengers had been interchanged, the tailors resolved to go. As is well-known, the consequence was that, when they had all collected in the market-place at Rostock, Owlglass put his head out of a window and advised the "honourable members of the tailors' guild" never to use a thread that had been passed through a needle's eye till, at the other end, a knot had been made. It is evident that the joke here lies in the disproportion between the preparations and the effect—the pleasure lies in the discomfiture of the victims who get angry and are mocked. At the same time the intention is to satirize the solemnity and circumstance with which the honest citizens of those days no doubt often allowed themselves to be summoned to hear communications of equal importance. What moved the jester was perhaps thirst for revenge, or the desire to see the sensible and prosperous citizens of the North of Germany jeered at by him, the rustic fool and jester. All these motives find their origin in the feelings and not in the mind, unless in a very secondary way. Now compare to this the introductory jokes from the collection of the Hodja.

> Nasr-Eddin mounted the pulpit and said: "Mussulmans, do you know the subject on which I want to speak?" "We do not know it, Hodja." "How then," replied the Hodja, "shall I unfold a subject to you that you do not know?"
>
> On another occasion he mounted the pulpit and said: "Do you know, my faithful friends, what I have to tell you?" "We know," some called. "Why should I then explain what you know already," said the Hodja, and left the pulpit. The congregation sat dumbfounded. Then some one proposed that when he came back, some would answer that they knew and others that they did not know. This was approved of. The Hodja returned and called as before: "Do you know, brethren, what I want to say to you?" "There are some among us," they said to him, "who know and

others who do not know." "Well," answered the Hodja, "let those who know then tell those who do not know."

Here, too, there is disproportion, but it is not forced. As a matter of course the priest appears in the mosque before his hearers and the joke certainly does not lie in the disproportion between the assembly and the speech. There is also satire, perhaps. Possibly the suggestion is that the faithful may more than once have listened respectfully in this place to no greater wisdom. Possibly there is also pleasure at the discomfiture of others, but imperceptible and certainly not forced, while the thought of revenge seems to be entirely excluded. If there is emotion it is not of the occidental kind, which is apt to become exuberant and noisy, but oriental, so hidden by decorum. But what astonishes the hearers in this decorum and makes them consult each other? The nature of the Hodja's jest, which is evidently the principal thing here—the play of the intellect, the simple sophism. Here we are in the company of a speaker and among a population who are averse to noisy emotion, but conversant with wit.

What is the striking part of every joke? The surprise at the apparent taking the place of the real. When Owlglass advises the tailors not to use a thread without a knot and recommends this to them as a valuable trick, he does not lie. On the contrary, his remark is so striking, because one cannot help acknowledging that it appears true. Only *appears,* however; for a truth known to every one has no value as a communication. Owlglass brings back to reality what appears to be a truth no longer realized by anybody. But to Owlglass this is not enough. He is not satisfied. He arranges the circumstances in such a way that he can gratify his love of mockery and his desire to laugh at other people's expense. *His* joke is the saying of the apparent truth after the solemn deliberations and the troubles of the journey—a joke made rough and practical to suit his wants.

"O Mussulmans," the Hodja exclaimed one day, "thank God incessantly for making the camel without wings."

This is Nasr-Eddin's second jest which is even more like those of Owlglass—a self-evident truth reassuming an appearance of life, but the Hodja keeps it in its simple spiritual state. He and his hearers only enjoy this appearance of truth in the spirit. For this reason it would seem that the first jest is not unintentionally placed at the head of the collection; nothing bodily is here introduced as there is in the second; the Hodja appears on this first occasion as an artist of the sophism, a virtuoso of the apparent.

When the Hodja asks: "Do you know the subject I want to speak about?" he knows that he will be understood to ask: "Do you know what I want to tell you?" He sticks to the letter of his question, and

to the apparent truth, denying the truth of the meaning. In the same vein he advises his hearers to thank God for the winglessness of their camel. One thanks God for a great blessing; so . . . the Hodja is again the man of the literal truth: he is justified by the apparent.

It is clear that a man speaking in this fashion holds a sure position. From the first his sayings have the appearance of truth. Who contradicts him has the ungrateful task of unravelling and explaining differences. Besides, he who holds a position and then forces his hearer to reflect, also forces him to conjecture intentions, though they have scarcely been implied. What is more natural than, in the case of that camel, to think: "He wants to rebuke me for the silly objects of my gratitude." Thus the jester becomes the teacher, the admonisher. Curiously enough he *is* this in the figure of the Hodja; another proof that the character of the jester is completely understood by the Turkish mind. Hence to the entirely formal mind nothing is more refreshing than seeing this Hodja open the sphere of the apparent and move therein.

The deviation from the implied truth to a certain literal truth is such an opening. Why did the hearer not listen more carefully, one thinks. The accentuating of something that is true in general, but not in a particular case (gratitude for a blessing, in this case the winglessness of a camel) has not yet lost hold of the truth in general. In many cases it may be considered as a certain smartness, a quickness in seeing what might be called another and a less obvious side of the truth.

But with every following move toward the apparent we see the connexion with the truth lessened.

> One day a thief hid in the Hodja's house. His wife came to warn the Hodja. "Hush," he said, "God grant that he find something, then I can take it away from him."

Here there is no literal truth or general truth. The only alternative of great improbability is the bare possibility of the truth. The striking part of it is that we never thought of this possibility. The assertion owes its semblance of truth only to this. Another step and the immediate connexion with the truth is broken.

> The Hodja put a ladder against a garden-wall and pulled it up when he was on the top. Then he descended into the garden. The gardener noticed him and called: "What do you want here?" "I offer a ladder for sale," said the Hodja.

The surprise is undeniable. We feel that a lie has been told. What restrains us from saying so is the thought that it is the only assertion which *if it were true* would also appear true.

We see how the Hodja's mentality gives him a peculiar position. He

is the virtuoso of the apparent He always knows how to discover the one apparent truth and to profit by his hearer's doubt whether he himself may not have made a mistake.

The next stage lies in the following representation:

> The Hodja admitted himself into a garden. In his pocket and in his shirt he then hid carrots, turnips, and all that came handy. The gardener caught him red-handed. "What are you doing here?" he said. Frightened, the Hodja had no better answer ready than that a violent wind had landed him there. "But what of all that has been pulled up?" "If," said the Hodja, "the wind is strong enough to lift me up, it can also pull up your vegetables." "And who, do you think, put my vegetables in your pocket?" "That is what I too was just thinking about," answered the Hodja.

I only wish to draw attention to the last answer. Without getting clumsy the Hodja could not think of a single explanation that had any appearance of truth. But his inborn certainty that always, in all circumstances, there must be a way to justify oneself, in this case also shows him how to behave. The gardener has joined him in an investigation. The gardener asks and, together with him, tries to find the answer to something he does not know. There is no shame in acknowledging that one shares the gardener's ignorance.

Of this answer it cannot even be thought that it would appear true, if it were true, but yet one feels that it is the only untruth which could be said with a show of truth.

There is no longer any immediate connexion with the truth; only a very poor appearance of it has been kept up. There is a connexion, however, though not an immediate one—an example of which is found in the story just quoted. "The wind," says the Hodja, "put me in the garden." The gardener does not contradict this. He asks: "But what of the vegetables?" Unhesitatingly the answer follows: "If the wind were strong enough to lift me up it could also pull up your vegetables." Here logic, the strongest weapon of the virtuoso of the apparent, enters the arena. The connexion between his assertions and the truth is no longer immediate, but derived.

One day the Bey invited the Hodja to a game of *djérid* (played on horseback). At the moment the Hodja happened to possess a beautiful ox which he saddled and mounted, so coming to the appointed place amid the general laughter of those who saw him arrive. "Hodja," said the Bey, "riding an ox is something new, but I fear he cannot run." "I saw him run faster than a horse," answered the Hodja, "when he was only a calf."

Combine logically two truths: the calf ran fast, the calf became an ox, and you get at least the apparent truth of the logical form. The fact remains, however, that an ox does not run so fast as a calf.

Here follow similar combinations:

> When the Hodja had become a cadi two men came to ask justice. "That man," said the one, "has bitten me in the ear." "It is not true," said the other, "he did it himself." The Hodja asked them to leave the room for a moment. When he was alone he shut the door and tried to bite his own ear. The consequence was a fall and a broken head. He bandaged it and opened the door. When accuser and accused had entered the Hodja pronounced judgment. "It is certain," he said, "that a man can not only bite his own ear, but he can even break his own head."

The connexion between these two hurts is even slighter than that between the ox and the calf. And still looser is the tie between the elements of the following argument:

> One night, as he lay in bed, the Hodja heard a quarrel outside his door. "Get up," he said to his wife, "and give me the candle." "Stay where you are," she said. But he wrapped himself in his blanket and went out. Scarcely had he opened the door, when one of the quarrellers seized his blanket and ran off with it. Shivering the Hodja came in again. "What were they quarrelling about?" asked his wife. "About my blanket," said the Hodja, "as soon as they had that, they stopped."

To the jester, logic is a game and a weapon. Draw a conclusion of apparent rightness and you will surprise and amuse your hearer, dumbfound him for a moment, maintain your superiority, and perhaps make him feel that, by comparison, there is something in his behaviour that gives rise to such conclusions.

> The Hodja caught a stork, took it home, seized a knife, cut off its legs and beak, and put it in a high place. "There," he said, "now you look like the other birds."

Birds, like thoughts, are characterized by their appearance; change that appearance and you change them.

> Once, before prayer, the Hodja had not enough water for his ablutions. So he prayed with one leg drawn up, like a goose. "What are you doing?" he was asked. "This leg," he said, "has not been washed yet."

The leg was not clean so could not join in the prayer. Not only the character of birds, but also the inner nature of man is denied. This is entirely in keeping with this kind of reasoning. But this is a game the Hodja plays with himself. With regard to others his logic is a weapon wielded with great dexterity.

A thief penetrated into the Hodja's house, took as much as he could get, put it on his back, and made off with it. The Hodja, who had seen him, immediately took all that remained and followed the thief to his house. "What do you want?" asked the thief. The Hodja: "Aren't we moving to this house?"

When the Hodja was ill once, women came to visit him. One said: "We are in God's hand: when you die, how are we to mourn you?" "Mourn me," said the Hodja, "as one who was always asked more than he could answer."

The conclusion may reflect on the hearers; here the artist appears as a moralist.

One day, while the Hodja was sitting on the bank of a river, he agreed to ferry ten blind men across for a para each. While they were crossing, one of them fell in and was carried off by the current. The other nine began to cry and complain. "Why are you crying?" said the Hodja, "you pay me one para less and then it is all right."

Here is the cold, external reasoner who cuts off the stork's legs, but here is also the moralist who holds up a reflection before his hearers in which they recognize themselves.

Some one came to ask the Hodja how his patient was. "This morning he was well," he said, "now he is dead."

He adapts his answer to the understanding of the questioner. In the following story his self-defence is more apparent still:

A peasant brought the Hodja a hare. After joining him in eating it, he went away, but the following week he came in to dinner again and the week after, his neighbours came. Then another party came and when asked who they were, they answered, "We are the neighbours of the man who brought the hare." The Hodja put a plate of water before each of them. "What is this?" they asked. "This," said the Hodja, "is the gravy of the gravy of the hare."

A similar story is told of a beggar who first made him come down and then asked for an alms. The Hodja took him upstairs and there told him that he could not give him anything.

In connexion with this may be told the jest of the passing away of the world.

The Hodja had a lamb that he had fattened with great care. One of his friends came to him on a certain day and said: "To-morrow the world will pass away, let us to-day eat your lamb." The Hodja would not believe it, but when the second came and said the same, he took off his upper garment, made a big fire, and roasted the lamb on the spit. When it was eaten the friends also took off their upper garments and sat down to play. The Hodja picked up the clothes and flung them into the fire. "What are you doing there?" cried the players. "Is to-morrow not the last day?" said the Hodja. "What would be the use of upper garments then?"

There is more self-interest in the story of the large kettle and the small one.

The Hodja once borrowed a large kettle from his neighbour. After using it he brought it back with a small kettle besides. "Also a small kettle?" asked the neighbour. "The kettle got a young one," answered the Hodja. Soon after, he again asked for the loan of the kettle. When, after five days, the owner had not yet got it back, he knocked at the door of the Hodja, who opened it and asked what he wanted. "My kettle, please." "Your kettle? Alas, your kettle is dead." "Nonsense, a kettle dead!" "Yes, certainly, or did you think a kettle could only get young ones and not die?"

Nothing displeases the Hodja more than a truth which is plainly visible at once. He cannot imagine that anyone should take a pleasure in uttering an assertion which is not meant to mislead by its appearance. This explains his answer when a too simple riddle is set him.

A man hiding an egg in his hand addressed the Hodja saying: "If you guess what I have in my hand, I will give it you and you may make an omelette of it." "First tell me what it looks like," said the Hodja, "then I shall answer you." "White outside and yellow inside." "Oh, I know," exclaimed the Hodja, "a white turnip with yellow roots."

To one who always draws his conclusions from suppositions that are not obvious, a statement like this that at once betrays the truth is incomprehensible. This appears also in what follows. When some one is crying because he has lost his calf, the obvious thought that the man may be crying because he has lost his calf does not occur to the Hodja. He cries because it is lost and there he is wrong, as the calf is not lost, but hangs, cut open, in the Hodja's larder.

While he was walking in a field one day the Hodja saw a calf. He took it, killed it, and hid the skin. The owner of the calf passed below his window, weeping and sighing. "Wife," said the Hodja, "how ashamed that man would be, if I now showed him the skin of his calf."

One day a man came to ask the Hodja for the loan of his donkey. "It is not here," he said. But at that moment the donkey brayed. "Ah," cried the borrower, "you say the donkey is not here and it is braying." "What," answered the Hodja, "you listen to the donkey and not to me, an old man with a grey beard. What a strange man you are!"

We have seen how, in the Hodja's jests, the relation between apparent truth and reality gradually grows weaker, till at last only a deceptive logical form keeps up the appearance of truth. It naturally follows that when it is only by such a form that an appearance of truth is created it becomes unimportant if the elements constituting this form are taken from reality. For instance: when the braying of a donkey and the word of its master are no longer admitted in their real relation to decide where the donkey is, but the witty jester manages to represent them in such a way that, by means of a syllogism, he makes you believe that this relation is quite different, then it immediately follows that

not reality, but a syllogism, represents the truth. When the Hodja himself, having to bear false witness in a lawsuit, also denied what had already been proved, he said: "What does it matter whether I say it concerned corn or barley, if you want me to bear false witness anyhow." Once the truth of the syllogism is accepted, actual relations between things become unimportant. But what is the consequence? You are led to think that the logical form is independent of reality. But it is not. The relation between the donkey and the owner exists and if one can apparently turn it upside down by a logical trick, the relation itself enables him to do so. What will happen if, through contempt of that reality, you deny its relation? This, that you will lose the last logical sense of your argument. The trick by means of which you give an appearance of truth to something unreal will no longer be a logical trick, but hide anti-logic under a logical form. How can you, with an appearance of logic and the last shred of an appearance of truth, combine two heterogeneous quantities? Only by boldness and histrionic art.

We have now, starting from literal truth and through shapes of the apparent growing gradually more flimsy, arrived at the complete lie, which is only supported by belief.

> When the Hodja was one day fishing with some other men, he flung himself into the net, the moment it was cast out. "What are you doing, Hodja?" "I thought I was a fish," he said.

There is still some logical force left here. There must have been something in the Hodja that urged him to identify himself with a fish. This conviction of the inevitability of his act influences the spectators, the lie has an appearance of truth which may reveal something to them. We lose hold of the logical here and approach what, when it is unconscious, is called imagination. The sphere created by the Hodja is now that of the imagination of the anti-logical; and through this he wanders from end to end. The difference in consciousness is abolished. This is the foundation of this art which tries to be consciously unconscious. The difference in consciousness between children and grown-ups, between waking and sleeping, between life and death, between a human being at one moment and the same human being at another, is obviated and a world is opened in which the imagined equality of the heterogeneous is enacted.

> A man came to ask the Hodja for the loan of his ass. "Wait a moment," he said, "I will ask him." When he came outside again he said: "The ass refuses, saying that when I lend him, his ears will be boxed and I shall be laughed at."

> The Hodja carried three plums on a wooden plate. As he walked the plums chased each other. "Stop your game," the Hodja called, "else I shall eat you."

The Hodja put his cloak on his donkey's mat and went on some business. A thief passed, seized the cloak, and ran away with it. When the Hodja returned and missed his cloak, he put the mat on his own back and gave the donkey a lash saying: "Give me my cloak, then you'll get back your mat."

One day, when working in his field, the Hodja found a tortoise. He put a string round its neck, and hung it on his belt. The tortoise became restless. "Be quiet," said the Hodja, "now you can learn how to work in the field."

In the preceding tales we saw the Hodja in connexion with animals and things. In the following story the difference between human beings is caused to disappear:

The Hodja was twisting his turban but he could not knot the ends. After vainly trying several times he put it up for sale. There came a buyer. The Hodja stood beside him. "Don't buy it," he whispered, "the ends cannot be knotted together."

Various states of consciousness are beginning to get mixed.

The Hodja thought of building a subterranean stable such as used to be built in former times. While he was considering this plan he saw a great number of cows standing in his neighbour's cellar. He said to his wife, "I have found a subterranean stable full of cows and deserted since the time of the heathens."

Also between waking and dreaming the difference disappears.

The Hodja once, in a dream, saw a man who gave him nine aspers. He refused and asked ten. When ten were offered he asked nineteen, woke up during the negotiations and found that now he had nothing. So he shut his eyes again and said: "All right, give me nine."

It is but one step from this to the removal of the barrier between life and death:

The Hodja once asked his wife: "How can one tell whether a man is dead?" "By his having cold hands and feet," she said. A few days after the Hodja was in the wood and as he was walking along he felt his hands and feet getting cold. "I am dead," he said, and lay down at the foot of a tree. The wolves came and began to eat his donkey. "What a good thing," said the Hodja, "that the donkey's master has just died."

This same idea is still further elaborated in the following story:

The Hodja once passed a graveyard by the roadside and lay down in an old grave. "Will the good and the bad angel now come and question me?" he thought. While he was waiting, he heard the tinkling of bells and thought this might be the last judgment and the day of resurrection. So he rose from his grave and saw that it was a caravan of mules. The mules shied at his appearance and got confused. The mule-drivers ran up to him with raised sticks and called: "Who are you?" "I am a dead man."

"What are you doing here?" "I am taking a walk." "You wait, we'll help you to walk," and saying this they fell upon him and belaboured him with their sticks, till he was black and blue. When his wife saw him come back in this state, she asked: "Where do you come from, Hodja?" "From the dead, out of the grave." "And what is life like there?" "One thing one has to be careful not to do, my dear, and that is not to frighten mule-drivers."

In connexion with this the joke of the last will may be told:

The Hodja had made a provision in his last will that he should be laid in an old grave when he was dead. "Why?" asked the witnesses. "Because," said the Hodja, "when the angels come to interrogate me, I can say that they have already been."

The climax is found where the consciousness of self is entirely abolished. In two stories this is the case:

The Hodja met a man. They looked at each other and each went aside for the other. "Excuse me for asking you who you are," said the Hodja. "If you don't know me why are you then so surprised to see me?" The Hodja answered, "I saw that your turban and mine are alike and that your cloak is similar to mine: I thought you were me."

Here outward similarity is sufficient to make him conclude that there is an inner likeness. In the second story he does not realize that one cannot be in two places at once.

One evening the Hodja's wife washed his caftan and hung it in the garden to dry. The Hodja thinking he saw some one in his garden, fetched his bow, shot an arrow, and went into the house to sleep. The next morning he saw that he had shot an arrow into his own caftan. "Praised be God," he said, "that I was not in that caftan myself."

We have followed the Hodja from beginning to end—from apparent truth only distinguished from actual truth by a certain subtlety, to the deepest lie which is found in the absence of the consciousness of self. The jester is a harmoniously developed personality and the creator of his own reflection. I hope you will not deny the unity of this artist, nor that of his work of art. It consists in the perfect understanding of the apparent.

In contrast with Owlglass, the hard hater, this oriental, gently progressing through his country and through the circumstances of his life, is exceedingly amiable. With so much consistency of mind as I have been able to attribute to him, there is no one so inconsistent as he is in his acts. His play-acting is, in most cases, a game, childlike and full of fun.

One day the Hodja wanted to mount a horse; but he could not manage it. "Cursed animal," he cried. He looked around, saw that he was alone, and said: "Let us acknowledge that there are worse creatures."

One day the Hodja pulled a cart with a liver on it, behind him. A bird of prey swooped down and took the liver. When the Hodja looked round there was nothing. He then climbed on a height by the roadside, saw a man with a liver in his hand, snatched it away, and climbed with it to the top of the rock. "What makes you snatch away my liver, Hodja?" called the man. "I was seeing what it would be like to be a bird of prey."

The Hodja saw a great many ducks at play near a spring. He ran to them to catch one, but they flew away. Then he sat down, dipped his bread into the spring, and ate it. A passer-by asked: "What are you eating?" "Duck-soup," answered the Hodja.

This equanimity, this childlike imitation, this poetical faculty of finding comfort in imagining one has what one cannot get, all these are qualities by which it is easy to recognize the Hodja, once one has understood him. There is in his life a delicacy which, like a flavour, pervades all his jokes.

Here follow the stories of the ox with the well-implanted horns and of the moon pulled out of the well.

The Hodja possessed an ox with such beautifully implanted horns that there was room to sit between them. Whenever the Hodja saw it in the herd, he thought how much he would like to sit between those horns. One day, the ox lay down quite close to him. This was an opportunity which ought not to pass by. The Hodja jumped between the horns and sat down. The ox rose and at once flung him off. The Hodja recovered consciousness when his wife stood over him, weeping. "Do not cry," he said to her, "I have hurt myself badly, but I have done what I wanted to do."

"I have hurt myself," he also said, when he had fallen on his back in his attempt to fetch the moon out of the well, adding, when he saw it in the sky, "but the moon is in its place again."

Once the Hodja had brought a number of students of theology back with him. But on coming home he begged his wife to keep them away from him. So she went to the door and said: "The Hodja has not come home yet." This raised much argument, for each of them asserted that he himself had accompanied him to the door. At last the Hodja put his head out of the upper window and called: "Can a house not have two doors? Is it not possible that he has gone out by the other door and not returned yet?"

This amusing image of the Hodja with his head out of the upper window will, I hope, dwell in your memory. He is playing his part of the virtuoso of the apparent. He is forgetting the truth, but also himself —a lovable quality. When putting his head out of the window to prove to you that he is not present, he proves clearly that it is not for the

sake of some material advantage that he wants to be in the right, but solely, like every artist, for the beauty of the play-acting.

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ROLAND HOLST

Richard Nicolaüs Roland Holst was born in 1869 and became a student at the Government Academy of Plastic Art in Amsterdam. Starting as a painter of pictures, he later devoted himself to decorative and monumental art. In 1918 he became a professor at the Academy, and in 1926 succeeded to the directorship. In 1923 he published a volume entitled *Meditations of a Man Seeking Blackberries*, from which the following essay is taken. In 1924 his *Essays on Art and Artists* appeared.

This essay has been specially translated for the present collection by Miss J. F. de Wilde, D.Litt., and is used here by the author's permission.

DOG AND MAN

WHEN, advancing in years, you are getting more self-contained and apt to turn away from the world; when the autumnal silence, though by no means wintry decay, within you makes you incline to a peace too easily gained; then the moment has come for you to have a dog. I wish you to have one as a companion, partly because you probably need comfort, but more still, because it is good to have a warm-hearted being beside you, who knows nothing of what you have achieved, nor cares what you are trying to achieve, who thinks nothing of what you consider important and, so exacting is he, never spares you, but is victorious on every occasion.

Ever since the dog attached himself to man, he has shared the human lot and has been subject to the same humiliation which threatens man. Estranged from savage nature and free chase, he has, through the centuries, grown more and more dependent. If you are shortsighted, you can easily make him a slave of the bread-basket or force him to a submissiveness which scarcely astonishes us in our fellow-men. You can teach him to cringe or, misusing him, turn him into a policeman, a buffoon, or a miserable clown. You can make him vain, lazy, fond of dainties, or change him into a servile fawner. It may be owing to man that dogs become vicious and sullen, or deteriorate into bold vagabonds when they find no outlet for their faithfulness. Man may also turn into a calculating, petty-minded creature, and that quite easily, for are there not thousands of such?

All this you can do by hunger, pain, and cunning, not because you

are their superior, but because you have the power to humble them and render them contemptible, exactly in the same way that you can humble and render your fellow-men contemptible.

All this you can do.

But you can also, thanks to the dog, become more human, and wiser too, by recognizing nature. You will also be comforted by him, innumerable times, and be enabled, better than by listening to the confusing talk of insistent men, to fortify your faith in mankind, reflecting that men, those other poor dogs, may eventually regain their pride and self-reliance by being nobler and wiser masters to themselves.

But remember that every dog is a character, however pliable his nature may be, and if, instead of choosing your companion, you buy him at haphazard, you may find yourself deceived. Indeed, it is needless to increase your difficulties by living with and beside a dog who does not fit in with you, who understands you as little as you do him. Believe me, nothing but annoyance and humiliation on both sides will be the result.

You think this exaggeration?

Very well, then buy your dog at random and you will find what it means to be neither loved nor trusted, but constantly jeered at by an animal. Do not take a dog out of pity either, for really we are sufficiently pleased with ourselves already and quite sentimental enough.

But if you are lucky enough to possess a dog who strengthens the feeling of responsibility in you, you are privileged, for inasmuch as you love you will be changed.

Two primitive instincts appear strongly and distinctly in every dog. Through hundreds of centuries those two instincts have been preserved and they lie intact in every young, unsteady, puling little dog, like two poles between which its consciousness grows—the emotional instinct which urges him to seek man, and the physical instinct which urges him to go roaming and hunting. This is what gives the dog his great charm: his touching need of love and, side by side with it, his obedience to the strong call of nature, luring him to go where he entirely belongs to himself and lives at his own sweet will. But most touching it is to us, divided in nature as we are, to see how those two primitive instincts are at war in him, each fighting for its own rights so that the dog himself has great difficulty in finding the balance between those two compelling, yet clashing, desires on which his happiness depends to such a degree. Who does not discern this struggle in the dog has never understood the torturing nostalgia expressing itself in the deep sigh with which he curls himself up in the corner of the room, when he knows that all the doors are shut. Neither can he understand the exuberant joy which the dog shows when he comes home, after a long ramble, to his master, in whom, between ourselves, he has an exaggerated faith.

As this exaggeration remains silent, it never becomes, as among men, a public lie.

We are walking to my studio together; the sky is clear, the day fine. He goes along with me or runs on in front carelessly, but at one particular spot there comes a moment when, every day over again, the struggle between his two desires has to be fought. To the right are the woods and rambling and hunting, to the left the studio with snugness and the master. He hesitates, he lingers, he stops—the same struggle recurs every day . . . except when it rains.

"All right, go then, go then," and I close the door of my workshop. After a while he comes back and asks for admittance. He is wet with dew and out of breath, his panting satisfaction reminds you of the exhilaration with which a skater, after a long run, enters the warm inn, so that no one can doubt of the tingling joy outside. He is happy, but now his other urge must quickly be satisfied. It does not matter if he is dripping wet, he leaps to his master and presses close against him. Not till now does he feel completely and entirely satisfied.

What has the master done all this time? Often not yet ploughed a single furrow of his day's work. Might not he too have found happiness in the clear morning outside? We are often uncertain in our desires and but rarely steer our barque in a definite direction.

Certainly dogs are sometimes inconstant in their love, but are not we the same? Sudden moods come upon them as well as upon us. But how soon they turn back to the safe harbour! It seems that the slight menace renders the regained certainty deeper and happier. Who raises a wall round his own personality and keeps his friend a prisoner without, robs himself of the satisfaction of being preferred to every one else and of being, after all, the chosen one.

Coming home, back from the world of men, full of bitterness at the never ending waste of words, your self-confidence maimed and riddled, feeling weary and dull, you are hailed by your silent friend. Touching your heart at once by his gladness he settles down quietly, leaning heavily against your leg. The animal-warmth rises higher and higher, the nothing-demanding, calmly-waiting source of love below at last softens and thaws the heart.

If the master, by and by, delivered from pride and irritation, thinks more kindly of men, not, after all, so very different from himself, it is really not because his bitterness was without cause, nor because he has become wiser in such a short time, but because the silent animal has nourished him imperceptibly from the only source which can give relief from all the bitterness of life.

Now and then he slips down and falls asleep across his master's feet. Is he really asleep? Who shall say? You accommodate yourself to him and sit still, waiting till your friend awakes or wants to do some-

thing else. Who has not, keeping vigil by a bedside, unexpectedly received illumination? Who has not, when ill, although lying with shut eyes, recognized in the unseen presence of watchful love, a source of safe and blissful calm? Watcher and watched simultaneously, the dog is a weaver of repose, and while you imagine that you are allowing him to rest it is really he who forces you to that quiet which brings healing to the tired heart.

Hours have passed. You have sat bent over your work. Following your searching, winging thoughts your glance turns up and aside. There your eyes meet two other eyes which, who shall say how long already or why, have been watching you from the depth of the chair in which your friend lies curled up. No sound, no movement, nothing but two pairs of eyes which in the buzzing silence of the room meet, and in that meeting become aware of unexpected happiness. He wags his tail, scarcely perceptibly, but immovably he keeps looking at you, with persistent gentleness, as if he feared that by and by immeasurable seas will separate him from you again.

But these wide seas. They separate you even now, gulfs of spiritual and bodily differences not to be bridged. You are indeed out of each other's reach and yet, at the same time, are touchingly near. You ask for miracles; here is one of the miracles surrounding you which you so carelessly pass by. For is not this a wonder greater than the meeting of two souls who can measure each other's virtues and needs in the depth of their own hearts?

This is the meeting of two souls flying to each other from two worlds which are irrevocably separated, different in kind, in aim, and destination. And yet, just as a power that moves the universe rushes through the infinite, incalculable distances, so a small spark of that same power can do away with all distances and separations between two beings and kindle the desire for warmth in their hearts.

I have not tried to draw the picture of a special dog for you, for this would be doing injustice to the kind. To be honest, I must acknowledge that my thoughts have been stimulated by the remembrance of a small, black friend who accompanied me on the road of life for a while. The time was too short certainly, for I assure you that we had not nearly reached the end of our grateful astonishment at each other.

I am now thinking of his coming and departing. I saw him for the first time at my back-door, bright, strong, very young still, out of breath with running behind the bicycle of a grocer's boy. We caressed each other and a mutual liking at once sprang up. So he stayed with me. Indeed, this was a happy day in our lives. I remember the warm love he gave me, the many-coloured joy he brought me, the rest with all its beautiful revelations from which his presence dispelled the too great loneliness. When I saw him as he lay stretched out, the warmth of life ebbing from him, I fully realized that he had been my superior,

at least in never-failing honesty. He was my superior also in strong self-completeness.

At last, pathetically, he inclined his soft head to the great rest, and I realized that he who had so often overtaken me with wild joy, was now irrevocably in front of me on that long, uninterrupted course which we all make through the secrets of inscrutable nature.

DENMARK

Introductory Note

IN AN illuminating essay which is included in this volume Johannes V. Jensen, one of the foremost writers in Denmark to-day, suggests that the love of sport which the Dane has borrowed from England was inherited by the Englishman in his turn, from Scandinavia, so that the circle is now complete. It may be argued too that those qualities of fearlessness, energy, and independence which Englishmen are wont to ascribe, somewhat vaguely, to their Anglo-Saxon blood, are traceable in a large measure to the Danish sea-rovers who in the eleventh century gave fresh life and vigour to the English. However that may be, it is certain that the Scandinavian influence in our literature cannot easily be over-estimated. The Norse myths, so rugged and massive, have just these elements of mystery and awe which appeal most strongly to us. They breathe the spirit of freedom and adventure. Some of the Sagas of the *Heimskringla* tell of stirring events in history which are common to both races, while some of our most familiar folk-tales had their origin in Scandinavia. The Dane, then, may reflect without misgivings upon any indebtedness that he may feel to English literature and customs. It is, after all, merely a question of where one is to begin counting. If we start a hundred years ago then we are the pious benefactors: if a thousand, then we must both thank our common ancestors.

Modern Danish literature begins with Holberg, who, as a native of Norway, is often claimed for Norwegian literature. This is a dispute upon which a mere Englishman would be wise to shrink from entering. Yet some decision must be made, and as Holberg undeniably spent the major part of his life in Denmark, and as he belongs to the period when Copenhagen was the centre of all Scandinavian literary activity, he has been included here. The other examples from modern Danish essayists will show that the essay flourishes in Denmark to-day. There is a literary renaissance taking place there which it would be well to note carefully. Many of the bigger and more pretentious nations are content to live upon the achievements of the past. Not so Denmark.

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LUDVIG HOLBERG

LUDVIG HOLBERG (1684-1754) was born in Bergen during the political Union of Norway and Denmark. He graduated at the University

of Copenhagen, travelled to Holland and England, and—mostly on foot—through Europe, making prolonged stays in France and Italy. Returning to Denmark in 1716, he was appointed Professor, first of Philosophy, later of Classics, and finally of History, in the University of Copenhagen. He was the author of historical and philosophical works, satirical and mock-heroic poems, Utopias, essays, and letters. By publishing some of these in Latin, he gained a European reputation. In his old age he was made a Baron of the Realm, and on his death dedicated his large fortune to the Academy of Sorö, now a public school. Holberg gave the impetus to the foundation of a permanent national theatre in Copenhagen ("The Danish Stage"), established in 1722, for which he wrote not less than 33 comedies. As a playwright he has been called the "Molière of the North," a description no less deserved than that other which has been given him: "The Father of Dano-Norwegian Literature."

His works that have been translated into English include *A Journey to the World Underground*, *An Introduction to Universal History*, *History of Norway from 1397 to 1660*, *Three Comedies* translated by H. W. L. Hime (*Henry and Pernilla—Captain Bombastus Thunderton—Scatter-Brains*), *Three Comedies*, translated by O. J. Campbell (*Jeppe on the Hill—The Political Tinker—Erasmus Montanus*), and *Memoirs of Lewis Holberg*, from which the following essay is chosen.

HOLBERG LOOKS AT THE ENGLISH

THE English are either angels or devils; for one of the peculiarities of this people is to spurn all mediocrity. There is no medium either in their virtues or their vices; the good are excessively good and the bad immoderately bad. There is no country in the world which has furnished so many examples of exalted virtue and despicable treachery. The aristocracy have at one time hazarded everything to save their country, and at another hazarded everything to betray it.

Religion and infidelity, enthusiasm and indifference, industry and sloth, every kind of good and bad quality, here comes to maturity; so that England may be said to be the hotbed of virtue and of vice, of all that is most admirable, and all that is most deserving of condemnation. I will explain my meaning somewhat more fully by giving a few instances of the peculiarities of this people. There is no nation which is at the same time more industrious and more addicted to sloth. Indolent Englishmen cannot be compelled to work either by hunger or by imprisonment; hence mechanics and artificers are seen rotting in the public gaols, who might easily pay their debts and supply their necessities, if they would consent to exert their hands and limbs. On the other hand, Englishmen who are fond of labour, are fond of it to excess; they are deterred by no dangers, discouraged by no difficulties, but will

attempt impossibilities either to gratify their curiosity, or satisfy their thirst of gain. It may be said of Englishmen, that they either rot from the effects of idleness, or exhaust themselves by excess of labour and application.

Nor is any moderation observed in their literary pursuits; they either dislike reading, or devote their days and nights to books, and not infrequently lose their understanding in endeavouring to improve it. There is no country in Europe, perhaps, in which there are so many learned and so many ignorant members of the clerical profession.

In their religious opinions the same extremes prevail; piety and impiety, credulity and incredulity, fanaticism and atheism, hold alternate sway; everything is implicitly believed, or everything is audaciously rejected. Their piety frequently tends to superstition, and their scepticism to mere natural religion. Those who follow the doctrines of the Romish Church are more zealously attached to the Pope than Spaniards or Italians, and are ready to expose life, limb, and reputation, or even to betray their country, for his sake. The Protestants on the other hand believe the Pope of Rome to be the devil incarnate. It is owing to the excessive fervour and the great incredulity which prevail in England with respect to religion, that Christianity has nowhere been more violently assailed, or more ably defended.

It is evident from this sketch of the English character, how erroneous the conclusions of those writers must be, who ascribe to the whole nation good and bad qualities which belong only to a part of the people; for it may be truly said that England is at once the best and the worst of the nations of Europe. Other nations have their peculiar virtues and vices, but observe more moderation in both, and do not arrive at the same maturity in either; for the characters of most men are so compounded of good and bad qualities, that it is not easy to refer them to a particular class.

There are some characteristic peculiarities, however, which may be applied to the whole English nation. They are too vain of themselves, and too much inclined to despise foreigners. This vanity is pardonable, if we reflect upon their happy government, their wealth, the fertility of their soil, and the various blessings which nature has lavished upon them. The men are for the most part brave, and the women beautiful; the former have gained an ascendancy abroad, but the latter reign paramount at home. The English, who aim at universal dominion, patiently submit to the yoke of female government; and while they meet external aggression like lions, they cower under domestic tyranny like mice. We have lately witnessed an instance of a general,[1] at whose name the greater part of Europe trembled, submitting with passive obedience to the tyranny of his wife; nor is this spirit of submission

[1] Marlborough.

to the sex peculiar to the hero I allude to, for almost the whole nation partakes in it.

The apprehension of the English is not so quick as that of the French, but their judgment is sounder. They talk little, but what they say is well digested. They excel in oratory; indeed they are the only people of modern Europe who rival the ancient Greeks and Romans in the art of public speaking. In other countries elegant and polished orations are delivered, but they want the vigour which unrestrained freedom of speech imparts to the effusions of English eloquence. The speeches delivered in the English Parliament may sustain a comparison with the best models of Greek and Roman eloquence, which they resemble in being pronounced on occasions of great public importance, and on subjects immediately connected with the interests of the state. To this freedom of speaking and writing is also to be attributed their superiority over other nations in writings relating to religion and morals. They are inferior to the French in their historical compositions, which are rather dry details of facts, than well-digested histories; and though they are not restrained from publishing the truth by any considerations of fear, yet, as England is divided into political factions, the spirit of party frequently induces them to suppress the truth.

It has been said that the devil once threw all the ancient and modern languages into a brass pot, and that, when the pot began to boil, he made the English language out of the scum. This story was evidently invented by some one who thought the English language rather a chaos of other idioms, than a distinct dialect; but the number of words which the English have borrowed from other nations has added to the copiousness of their language, and to their power of expressing every sentiment of the human mind with energy and sublimity. The richness of the language has conspired with the character of the nation to give excellence to their heroic poetry; and no poets, after Homer and Virgil, have attained the eminence of Milton and Pope. In their comedies they do not equal the French; for they have a taste for a peculiar kind of humour, which is offensive to foreigners. When the drama flourished in this country, I tried to translate some of the English plays into Danish; but nobody relished them. They were not deficient in point and facetiousness, but they wanted that festive character which is the soul of comedy. As the English are greatly addicted to profound meditation, their country may be considered a true school of philosophy. It has produced philosophers not less distinguished for their morals than their attainments, who possess all the virtues and the learning, without the affectation and the uncleanliness, of the sages of antiquity. The light which their labours have thrown upon mathematical science, and upon natural and moral philosophy, is known to all Europe; indeed, England may be truly said to be the country of heroes and philosophers.

Their taste in literature has varied at different periods of their history. Blackmore observes, that his countrymen once read with avidity tales of giants, monsters, and knight-errants; that they afterwards delighted successively in equivocal subtleties, in pompous inflation, in harmonious elegance of diction; and that now the prevailing taste is for solid, unsophisticated erudition. The English preachers seem now studiously to avoid the sonorous phraseology which was once so much in vogue, and to confine themselves exclusively to the explanation and illustration of scriptural texts. Every branch of literature has been greatly advanced in this country by the emoluments and honours which are lavished on men of letters. Noblemen, commanders of armies, kings themselves, do not think it beneath their dignity to swell the list of authors by their literary labours. The illustrious Newton was lately buried with almost regal state, his bier being supported by nobles of the realm; and a short time before, when Burnet completed his *History of the Reformation,* thanks were voted to him by both Houses of Parliament. When such honours are bestowed on learning, it is not surprising that the progress of England in the liberal arts should have surpassed that of the rest of Europe, and that the muses should, as it were, have chosen this island for their favourite retreat. There is another circumstance which has contributed to give them their intellectual superiority: I allude to the readiness with which they surrender prejudices to the triumphs of reason. The brains of Englishmen are like polished tablets, on which you may impress anything which does not shock reason and common sense; whereas in other countries established usages, like the dictates of a second nature, reign with tyrannical sway. If you wish to convince a Spaniard of the truth of any doctrine or opinion, you must first get rid of his ancient prejudices. Here is a double labour; for you have not only to make a new impression, but to efface all traces of the old one. An Englishman, on the contrary, when he hears any new doctrine broached, readily apprehends and examines it, and, if it stands the test of examination, as readily embraces and inculcates it. Hence the great variety of opinions which prevail in this country on subjects connected with religion, politics, and morals. As the English believe nothing which they do not comprehend, and avow frankly what they comprehend, and as freedom of opinion is not limited by any legal restraints, there are as many atheists in this country as there are hypocrites in other countries. There is perhaps in reality a greater number of atheists in Italy; but the number seems less, since they conceal their infidelity under the mask of piety. In England you may distinguish the pious from the irreligious, for, in general, men who appear to be religious really are so; but this distinction can scarcely be made in other countries, where men conceal their sentiments from the fear of punishment. For the same reason good citizens are in England easily distinguished from the disaffected, and the government may rely

on the sincerity of those who profess an attachment to existing institutions. Such are the effects of liberty, which, among various inconveniences which result from it, is the source of a far greater proportion of benefits to the state.

The English are exceedingly indulgent toward those who reject altogether the established religion, but bitter persecutors of those who dissent from it only in a minute degree. Thus they have no objection to Jews, Turks, and Pagans; but they detest and abominate such of their brethren as dissent from them in some unimportant ceremonies. Hence, if you wish to lead a quiet life, and be accounted a good citizen, you must be completely orthodox, or a frantic infidel; for a moderate degree of error will not save you from hatred and persecution, and you can only live in peace by believing the whole, or rejecting every part, of their religion. This absurdity, though eminently conspicuous in England, is not peculiar to that people. It prevails perhaps to as great an extent in other countries; thus a Persian is more odious than a Christian to a Turk, an orthodox Roman Catholic hates a Jansenist more cordially than a Calvinist, and a genuine theological hatred subsists between the different orders of monks.

The clergy live with less restraint in England than in other countries, for they are not afraid of being seen in theatres and taverns. But if they live with less restraint, they preach with greater moderation; for they stand in the pulpit almost motionless, with their eyes fixed to the ground, and deliver devout, solid expositions of the Scriptures; differing widely in this respect from the continental preachers, who distort their limbs with a kind of frantic enthusiasm, and resort to theatrical gestures which are calculated to excite the derision rather than the sympathy of their hearers. It has been objected as a fault against the English preachers, that they read their sermons from manuscript; but the consequence of this practice is, that their discourses are more coherent, and that tautology is avoided. Hence my ears were offended by the first sermon I heard after my return from England; for having been accustomed to methodical, well-digested sermons, I observed so much confusion and repetition in the discourse of the preacher, that it seemed as if an hour had been consumed in delivering what might have been said in one-fourth of that time.

The following are points of comparison which may be remarked in the characters of the French and English. The French are greater talkers, the English greater thinkers; the former excel in vivacity, the latter in solidity of intellect. The French dress with splendour, the English with neatness; the French live almost exclusively on bread, the English on meat. Both are passionate; but it is the blood which rouses the passion of a Frenchman, and the bile which exasperates an Englishman. The anger of a Frenchman is more violent, that of an Englishman more pertinacious. A Frenchman spends his money on his clothes,

an Englishman on his belly. A Frenchman follows the stream, an Englishman delights in struggling against it. The friendships of the French are quickly formed, and as quickly dissolved; those of the English are formed slowly, and as slowly relinquished. The French respect their superiors, the English respect themselves; the former are better citizens, the latter better men. The mental endowments of the French are of a more refined, those of the English of a loftier, character. The French practise virtue for the sake of reputation, and seek the reward of meritorious actions in popular applause; the English practise it for its own sake, and seek no reward but that which springs from the consciousness of rectitude. There is the same relative difference in their vices as in their virtues. Both commit crimes; the French from the love of gain, the desire of vengeance, or similar motives; but the English are often criminal for the mere sake of committing crime. The French, like the people of other countries, often commit crimes in the hope of escaping punishment, but the English frequently commit crimes because they know they cannot escape unpunished; so that the very severity of the law, which deters others from crime, often operates as an additional stimulus on the English for the commission of offence. "I would commit this offence," exclaims the Frenchman, "if the law permitted it." "I would not commit this offence, if it were not prohibited by law," is frequently the language of the Englishman.

The French do not live penuriously, but the English have a passion for the pleasures of the table. The former eat for the sake of living, the latter live for the sake of eating. The French delight in dishes seasoned with culinary skill, the English prefer plain but succulent dishes. French dishes are prepared with ingenuity, and address themselves to the palate; English dishes are dressed without art and make a direct appeal to the belly. The French drink either to allay thirst or to exhilarate the spirits; the English often drink for the mere sake of drinking. The French believe before they examine; the English examine before they believe. Frenchwomen live with little restraint, since their husbands are not jealous; Englishwomen live with still less restraint, though their husbands are jealous of them to madness. Both possess fertility of imagination; but the imagination of the French is more regulated, while that of the English savours more of extravagance. Hence in their conversation and writings the French have more vivacity and grace, the English more richness and luxuriance. The French, however wretched may be their condition, are attached to life, while the English frequently detest life in the midst of affluence and splendour. English criminals are not dragged, but run to the place of execution, where they laugh, sing, cut jokes, insult the spectators; and if no hangman happens to be present, frequently hang themselves. As the character and manners of these two nations are so different, the hostility which constantly subsists between them ceases to be surprising. With

respect to England, it is certainly one of the most singular countries in the world. We meet here with many peculiarities which excite our admiration and astonishment; and if any readers should suppose that my account of the virtues and vices of this people is hyperbolical, let them remember that one cannot write of a nation which scorns all mediocrity, otherwise than in the language of hyperbole.

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GEORG BRANDES

Georg Brandes (1842-1927), a literary critic of European fame, was born in Copenhagen. After being educated at the University of Copenhagen, he spent several years abroad in France, Italy (1866-67), and Berlin (1877-82), and went on lecture tours to Poland, Russia (1886-87), England (1913), United States (1914).

He was the author of thirty-three volumes of literary history and criticism. Works that have been translated into English include: *Main Currents in Nineteenth-Century Literature; William Shakespeare; Lord Beaconsfield; Ferdinand Lasalle; Friedrich Nietzsche; Goethe; Voltaire; Cæsar; Michel Angelo; Henrik Ibsen—Björnson; Impressions of Russia; Poland, a Story of the Land, People, and Literature; The World at War; Recollections of My Childhood and Youth.* The following essay, which was written on his seventieth birthday, has been taken from *Samlede Skriften* by permission of Messrs. Gyldendal, and specially translated for the present collection by Miss M. Guiterman.

LIFE

(February 4, 1902)

THERE is a tower that all must climb. At most, a hundred stairs lead up it. The tower is hollow, and if once a man has reached the top, he falls down through it and is crushed. But hardly anybody falls down from so high up. It is the fate of each individual that if he reaches a certain appointed stair whose number he does not know beforehand, the stair gives way under his feet, reveals itself as the covering to a pitfall, and he disappears. Only he does not know whether the stair is the twentieth or the sixty-third, or what its number is; but that one of these stairs will give way under him, this he surely knows.

At first to ascend is easy, but slow. The ascent itself causes not the slightest difficulty, and at each stair the view through the peep-holes in the tower gives pleasure enough. Everything is so new. The eyes dwell with a lingering interest on what is near as well as what is far away.

And there is so much still in prospect. By degrees, the ascent causes more difficulty; the eyes grow more indifferent to the view, which always looks the same; and at the same time it seems as if there is hardly any lingering on each single stair, but as though one mounted more swiftly than before and took several stairs at a time; which, however, cannot be.

As often as, once a year, a man mounts a stair, his fellow-travellers wish him joy of not yet having disappeared. Each time that he has ten stairs behind him and begins on a new landing, the congratulations are warmer; and each time the ever more paradoxical hope that his journey may long continue is more cordially expressed. The man concerned is generally deeply moved, and forgets both how little satisfaction he has behind him and what adversity is still in store.

So life passes for the majority of so-called normal people who remain spiritually in the same place.

But there is also a pit shaft into which those who desire to dig themselves galleries under the earth may descend, and likewise those whose desire is set on exploring the galleries others in the course of the centuries have dug. From year to year these continually go deeper down, to where metals and minerals lie hid. They make themselves familiar with the subterranean world, find their way among the labyrinthine galleries, direct or understand or take part in the work down there, and in this forget how the years are passing.

This is their life who in the deep-delving labour of thought and inquiry forget the events of the day, and who, busied in their quiet avocation, survive the losses and sorrows the years bring and the joy the years steal away. When death draws near, they, like Archimedes in his day, make petition: "Do not disturb my circles!"

There is also a wide field that stretches out endlessly before the eye, like all those kingdoms of the world the Tempter showed the Saviour from a mountain; and some there are, those that eternally thirst after life and are covetous for conquest, for whom life is this: to take care that they gain ever more ground, attain an ever wider range of vision, a fuller experience, a greater mastery over men and things. Warlike expeditions tempt them, and power is their delight; their constant wish is to secure themselves ever more in men's minds and women's hearts. Insatiate they are, incalculable, strong. They use the years so that the years do not weary them. They keep all youth's characteristics—its love of danger, love of life, love of conflict, vigour and freshness of will; and however old they grow, they die young. As the salmon against the stream, so their instincts go against the stream of the years.

But there is also a workshop—a workshop in which the labourer is so at ease that, all his life long, he works and thrives there every day, and so is not aware that he is ageing. For surely there are certain things

that are done best in the freshest years of youth; those for which knowledge and experience are but little needed, but where to begin well is the only thing that counts. Yet there are many other things that he does best who knows most and has seen most. In this workshop into which life may be transformed it is good to be and comfortable to journey, because the beginner realizes that it depends on himself whether he becomes master and because the master knows that no talk is more stupid than talk of the discontinuance of the mastership after a certain set number of years. He tells himself that there is not an experience, however painful it may be, not an observation so insignificant nor an investigation so sweeping, not a joy nor a sorrow, not a defeat and not a victory, not a dream, a conjecture, a fancy, a human whim, but may in one way or another benefit his work. And therefore the work must of necessity be richer the older he grows. He fears no danger from his own nature; he relies on his instincts, entrusts himself to them with a quiet mind, certain that they will lead him aright, since they are his own, and certain that he will be able to make use in his workshop of all to which they lead. So his days pass without hope of a happiness that may fail to come and without fear of any evil that might lurk in his own being, or of the loss of its powers.

If his workshop be not big, it is big enough for him; big enough for him to be able in it to give figures shape and thoughts expression. Busy as he is, he has no time to glance across at the hour-glass in the corner in which the sand is always running. But when kindly thoughts are sent him, he is aware of it as though a loving hand had turned the hour-glass and so delayed its running out.

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VILHELM ANDERSEN

Vilhelm Andersen, Dr. Phil., Professor of Scandinavian Literature in the University of Copenhagen, was born in Sealand in 1864. He was one of a group of young literary historians who were inspired by Georg Brandes' work and personality. Vilhelm Andersen soon struck a new note, more characteristically Danish than his master's. A good classical scholar, he has concentrated on Danish literature, and in one of his chief works (*Tider og Typer af dansk Aands Historie*), has traced the influence of classical learning on intellectual life in Denmark through the ages.

In addition to his greatly appreciated University teaching and the constant lecture tours which take him not only into every corner of Denmark but to the other Scandinavian countries as well, Vilhelm Andersen has found time to produce a very large number of works on Danish literature: monographs, essays, biographies, and articles. In conjunction with Carl S. Petersen, he is at present engaged in edit-

ing a comprehensive illustrated history of Danish literature in four volumes.

The following essay has been taken from *Folk og Mennesker* by permission of the author and specially translated for the present collection by Miss M. Guiterman.

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

1918.

ONCE he was a majestic figure. Then people tried to make him comic. Now he is tragi-comic. The tragi-comic idea is a very noble idea in æsthetics. And in this sense to be a government official is still a very noble occupation.

I who now, in the summer of 1918, write these words, count with pride sixteen ancestors in the ranks of Danish government officials. My youth coincided with the constitutional struggle at the close of last century, when office still showed in all its majesty, but against a background of comedy of which the holder himself was only half aware. The best part of it I spent in two small towns, governed respectively by a spiritual and a temporal head, to both of whom I was related. I can truthfully say that it is a melancholy pleasure to me now to look back on those old days.

Every summer the Dean used to drive out of the first of the two towns—the spiritual—on a visitation of his district, with his two "inspectors," a master mason and a master carpenter, directly opposite him on the front seat of the open landau. He had this personal peculiarity, that he sneezed when he got out into the sun. When this event took place, both inspectors rose in their seats, even if the carriage were in motion, and said with one voice: "God bless your Reverence!"

In the other town, the one that lay under temporal authority, asphalt had been laid down as an experiment on the sidewalk from the Mayor's residence to the house down the road in which his son-in-law, who was chief attorney, lived. One day, as the Mayor was walking along the asphalt, bent on the private but lawful business of calling on his daughter, he encountered on that same asphalt the town's sole social-democrat, whose name was Sivertsen and who had one leg. This man was now, seemingly without any other object and with evident enjoyment, promenading his wooden leg on the soft substance. But the Mayor, in general a liberal man and glad to allow the common people all the solace consistent with the general good, noticed that the cheerful wooden leg was making little hoof-marks in the fresh asphalt, so in passing he let fall the words: "Out in the road, Sivertsen!" And as long as the Mayor was within earshot, the leg rattled violently but dutifully against the cobblestones.

A man gains a great veneration for office by growing up like this under the crossing of the spiritual and the temporal swords. But where, in these days, am I to take this veneration? Now it is Sivertsen who is mayor, and instead of the old parsonage the inspectors' sons have manufactured a bird-box for the Dean's successor, where a modest black-coated figure pops in and out on his unostentatious ecclesiastical affairs.

Nothing shows more clearly that the officials have become as small as they actually have than that their dwellings have grown too big for them. They cannot afford to live in them. It is very discouraging not to be able to afford to be your father's son.

What has been lost with the old parsonages must be evident to all. Even those who are not prepared to acknowledge without question that they are stations on the road between heaven and earth know to what an extent they have made smooth the changes among the various strata of society, between scholars and laymen, upper and lower classes. By his culture and mode of thought the village parson was the bishop's equal; by nature and his mode of life he, or at any rate his wife, was the peasant's comrade. Their home was so beautifully in harmony with the peasant's, for the very reason that it was different from it. For culture depends largely on a sympathetic feeling for the difference that exists in equality. It will benefit neither party nor their mutual respect if the clergy are forced to be in every respect the tenants of their congregations.

Probably what made the old official residences of importance to social intercourse was that they were big open houses with room for hospitality to all. They gave the race that grew up in them time and opportunity properly to strike root among the people.

It is true not only of the clergy, but of all officials, that they are a wandering race. A grandfather in the marshes, a father in an east Jutland country-town, a son in Copenhagen or a Sealand village. Or possibly, through his father's "transfers" during his boyhood and development, he may have seen the whole of his native land—country, classes, and people. There is no place where he belongs, but he has lived long enough in each place to gain the insight which, in conjunction with their outlook and general view, make up the full education of the people. That class of the community which has gained the reputation of being the least national has in a way been the most national of them all, not peculiarly Danish, but typically Danish. In our more recent literature, Henrik Pontoppidan, in contradistinction to the contemporary "poets of the homeland," is a writer of this type. His latest work, *The Kingdom of the Dead,* may be taken as an elegy on the decay of the old official families.

For this generation of the wandering ruling class, these privileged nomads of the community, are on the way to becoming its pariah caste.

The term is not too strong. High prices and the law of supply and demand have proved it. Everything has swollen, only one thing has stayed firm as a rock: the zero on which officials have to live. Or rather: while everything else has risen, the zero has been growing too. The Danish official class is not on a minimum wage, but on a kind of minus wage, a daily diminishing income. Economically speaking, the sign has been reversed.

Economic undernourishment has been accompanied by social humiliation. It is a long time since there was any ring in the word *official*. It is beginning to disappear from the language now. No cook puts up with being called a servant any longer; an official is glad to answer to the name. He hopes thus by developing a kind of protective mimicry of other functionaries and servants of the State that he will be able to obtain by artifice a small share in the approaching—long-suffering word!—the unfortunately far too slowly approaching distribution of alms.

To threaten is better than to beg. Let us revenge ourselves!

Not by any outward demonstration which would be at variance with that dignity which is the only thing that has been left us. Though who cannot see in spirit the effect of such a train of shadows—ghosts of fat priests and lean professors, with no other means of concealing their shame than a banner of unpaid tailors' bills—issuing from the heart of the Latin quarter, moving along the route of the Royal Guard toward the palace, muttering through parched lips in bad Latin the heroic litany: "Hail Cæsar! Those who are about to die thank thee for that which is approaching!"

But no! Our revenge, as befits our traditions, shall be of the spirit.

None of us will come through this starvation test unscathed. Not those, either, who have had to plough two furrows all this time to keep themselves from sinking. But if we get through the eye of this needle, we shall, like hardy camels, grow again on the other side. Not in our fathers' likeness—none of us will be able to fill the back seat of a landau with the weight of office any longer.

Yet we shall prove to have become hardened in the process of emaciation. Latterly doubts have been raised, and with reason, as to whether the experience of these years has been good for the little neutral nation as a whole, and whether it will, without the test of the War, be able to hold its own with the battle-hardened nations in the competition that is coming. But about the Royal Danish official there is no room for doubt.

What we have learnt shall appear in our posterity. The classic example of the changed estimate of the wage due for work that is useful to the community is of course that a porter in the meat-market has been able to earn just as much a year as one of the highest government officials. Now it remains to be seen whose children will make

the better citizens, the bacon-carrier's, or the official's porridge-and-sausage-fed progeny.

But our superiority will also show itself in ourselves, in our class-consciousness. We have been denied equality; very well, we will be different. The community has placed us outside its general increase in prosperity as a caste that has been left behind. So we will join in afresh as a fighting class. When we are able to afford a twopenny cigar or fodder for the old pipe again, we will labour with as much good humour as anybody who has ever called himself by the honourable name of labourer. Then there will probably be something to spare for a song. When the "poor servant-girl's ditty" is mute, there will be ears to hear the song of the happy civil servants.

When we get what we want—equality—we will sing of inequality. Not only of the inequality between the work that only brings in money and that which means "service" too, and of the attendant moral of the different kinds of work. But about the fundamental difference—the true and beautiful difference on which the society of the future also must be built. If we have honestly played our part in wiping out all external barriers we will work just as sincerely to raise them afresh in essentials. To let every man be good for something and make himself as good, *i.e.*, as well adapted to his actual task and his historical qualifications as possible—that is the only basis for a conservative policy.

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JOHANNES V. JENSEN

JOHANNES V. JENSEN, poet, novelist, and short-story writer, was born in Jutland in 1873. After a few years at the University of Copenhagen he gave up his medical studies for journalistic and literary work. He has travelled widely in Europe, Asia, and America. His point of departure, both in his life and in his writings, is his native Himmerland in Jutland, the ancient home of the Cimbrians, the peasant life of which he has admirably described in his famous short stories. Throughout his production, from the early *Himmerland Stories* and exotic tales, to the *Myths* and the longer novels, his poetic vision, which was at first focussed on life in his native region, has grown until now it encompasses the whole Northern race wherever on the globe he finds traces of it, and indeed in his latest writings it embraces all creation. His chief work, *The Long Journey*, which has been called "a prose epic of evolution," is the white man's story from the Ice Age to Christopher Columbus. Johannes V. Jensen is undoubtedly the greatest prose writer in present-day Denmark, a renewer of the language, and a lyric poet of great originality and genius.

Works which have been translated into English include: *The Long Journey*, (I. Fire and Ice; II. The Cimbrians; III. Christopher Colum-

bus.) His latest work, *The Transmutation of Animals* (1927), will shortly appear in English.

The present essay has been specially translated by Miss M. Guiterman by permission of the author.

THE ENGLISH STYLE

In the History of Sport

THE way in which influence and style from England have made their mark on the Continent—here we are primarily considering Denmark—during the last twenty to thirty years is still "within the memory of man."

If one thinks back, and bears out recollection with old fashion-books from the eighties and nineties of last century, it is possible to establish, as a thing now almost forgotten, that the majority of people in Europe at that period followed French fashions. Even before, and not with reference to clothes alone, Europe was under French influence; in literature the realistic school—Zola, Flaubert, Taine—was imported into Denmark in the seventies and superseded the earlier so-called romantic school; in art French influence is still paramount in most countries.

This French period, *the eighties,* considered from the point of view of style, now stands as a horror to the succeeding age, a time one is ashamed of and fears like some ridiculous and unpleasant infection—"Christian IX's" style is sometimes spoken of by another name, an injustice to that blameless king in whose reign it flourished; whatever it is called, what is meant is the taste of the end of the nineteenth century as revealed in dress (bustles!), in furniture (tassels, plush furniture, albums on the table, picture-frames of gilded fir-cones, majolica, and *cuivre poli,* etc., etc.); in architecture (the horrors of that period that still adorn Copenhagen, the "Restaurant National"); in literature, as already mentioned (the bedside novel); in art (incompetents painted by incompetents)—altogether a dismal kind of baroque that succeeded classicism in this country, luxurious and affected, a distressing chapter in the history of art and pretty incomprehensible now.

Of course everything did not come from France, Germany yielded her mite; the passion seems to have spread equally all over the Continent, an infection that accompanied and was perhaps identical with "civilization"; this species of style had its heyday contemporaneously with *the industrialization of the world,* which began and culminated in the nineteenth century: goods and products turned out by machinery and poured into the home, where they made everything cheap, from the houses to their fixtures, the clothes, even the souls themselves. Much of it bore the familiar stamp of Germany, but taste in general, the

mental disturbance, the guilt—indeed it seems as though the cause of this were more comprehensive: it was the *commerce,* the sudden and unprepared-for blending of nationalities and instincts that was to blame for the confusion of ideas; on thinking back, the world at that time reminds one of a big universal caravanserai or a bazaar in which the souls, just like the wares, bore one and the same false stamp, trade going on apace, and everybody flashy, an abundance of *everything,* and all things false, the whole age flashy, the clatter of tin and nothing inside. *Industrial baroque,* or the *bazaar style,* might be a name for this unhappy period.

But toward the twentieth century another influence, another style begins slowly to make its way on the Continent. Middle-aged people can remember how it happened, of its own accord, not consciously at once, that came later; the movement had something imperceptible and irresistible about it, like every movement that elementary forces underlie. This elementary power came from England.

The difference can be traced in the language; new customs are accompanied by new words. In the nineteenth century the very words that had to do with style were derived from the French: one had to dress *elegantly,* which is to say tastefully, and in the French style; one spoke of the *mode,* from which *modern*—and in this sense the idea grew and came to mean all that was new and in consequence correct, of *our* time, this so enlightened and so superior age, in contrast to all the foregoing dark centuries. We must hope that the enlightenment may prove to have been more than a mode; but we can't be too certain.

To be *modern,* this was simply the creed of the nineteenth century. Humanly and socially, the idea one burned to approach was *le Marquis,* the flower of France—and of course he is still remembered as he appeared in the streets about twenty years ago with his silk hat and long black coat, the frock coat, patent leather boots in the morning and the carefully waxed moustache, his Burgundian-blue, Gallic features bearing the marks of many adventures. *C'est ça,* he would say.

All the time that the Marquis was the absolute lord of the imagination of the Europeans, the Englishman sat tight at home on his island, unimpressed, and himself unnoticed, separated from the Continent by the Channel, which has always been a difficult and hostile sea to cross.

On both sides the myths, a set of definite conceptions, were in circulation, legends about the extraordinary people on the other side, in the way that savage tribes take stock of one another from a distance; in the literature of the Continent all through the nineteenth century the Englishman is described and made fun of *in checks,* the only characteristic of a Briton anyone knew anything about. Presumably it dates back to the impression of Englishmen travelling in Europe—the English tourist, once so conspicuous and so much derided. No one had any

idea of what he was like at home beyond a general impression that he was *eccentric*—another keyword which was in use on the Continent when the English were spoken of. Nevertheless, this eccentric person in checks was to make such an impression on Europe that people allowed both his pattern and his original habits to leave their impress on them, as later it became a fact that whisky supplanted absinthe.

What the English on their part thought of the Marquis at the time might be substantiated by quotations from English literature—from Thackeray down to writers of our own time—until the War! Official English opinion of France is a different thing now from what it was in the nineteenth century when the Napoleonic Wars had biassed it. If they are held up against each other now, these two different ways of thinking of France, neither of them seems to be particularly detached. It would be most polite perhaps not to remember either of them at all. For in the meantime the Marquis also has disappeared, gone out of popular favour for ever, so what was said of him in England at that time shall rest.

Now of course the English style has conquered the Continent, has even prevailed, on the surface, in France, the mother-country of *la mode*. Now one speaks of *fashion,* and hopes to be *fashionable, English,* a synonym; instead of consecrating its devotion to the Marquis, the general desire is set on being like a *gentleman.*

This is what everybody knows, simply an indication of facts. To the English, who have radiated their influence whilst they themselves were in the centre of the movement, nothing new for them, it must be curious to see the world gradually changing into their likeness in this way. It is interesting to work out how it began, outside England, and for that a detailed historical investigation may be required.

People who are now in the fifties or thereabouts can remember the transition from one style to the other in this country; and indeed it was more than a change of clothes. First dress changes, then taste, the view of life; eventually the moral code.

Out of the public eye went that weary, very experienced and highly polished Marquis, of whom we in this country only had an imitation and, I fear, a poor one; and in came a clean-shaven lad in knee-breeches, rather silent, not plausible and verbose like the admired Gallic *causeur* —but fond of games and devoted to sports.

Yes, the world made younger, boyhood and innocence introduced and gradually recognized as a form, as form itself! Since then the general impression of life all the world over is an impression of youth returned, play and games in the open, manly exercises, instead of the world of our staid fathers, they who knew not play, they who passed their days in drawing-rooms and worked hard to give the impression of always having been old.

It began, briskly and rashly, with the *bicycle*—no wonder the move-

ment gathered speed! Some elderly gentlemen, now a trifle grey, remember the high bicycles on which you hovered like a spider in its web, a twinge of rheumatism in some limb or an old fracture of the wrist, now healed, perhaps reminds them still of those breakneck days, the first forerunners of "sport"—and then look at the streets of Copenhagen now! Pedestrians, people who do not ride a bicycle, can be counted; but the cyclists can't! Here a sport has merged into everyday life, working-life, become part and parcel of every man's duties.

The history of *sport* (from *disport,* relaxation), as it began in England and developed in this country, in all its branches, is a long story which cannot be traced in detail here. It comes into most reminiscences, and forms the autobiography of many of the people who have their youth behind them in Denmark. Sport has now penetrated to the marrow of the nation. And without being conscious of it, the present younger generation is half, and more than half, English. All the words, the language, that have to do with sport, are English. To put it briefly, it all began with the bicycle and was finally clinched with puttees. You will find that every full-grown man in this kingdom is dressed like an Englishman, from his sixpence[1] right down to his unpolished, thick-soled box-calf shoes—not a passably neat, self-respecting person who is not in *checks!*

The very youngest generation, boy scouts from the cradle, seem to have been born with puttees on their legs, an article of attire that is pleasing to the eye but a little trying to the arteries. It is impossible to breathe without being in khaki. The chest will not expand unless it is covered with a scout's badges of honour, grades, and tokens. In all their glory, the children are like diminutive English field-marshals, Scottish Highlanders, and lords. The *lord* has become the idol where before the Frenchman was—a cult taken straight from England, where they have been unable to characterize the highest Being, the creator of the world, by any higher epithet than this: Our Lord!

And among adults, in society, the dress-coat has been replaced by the dinner-jacket, the artistic and corrupt cigarette by the more virile pipe. We have acquired the inevitable sports page in our newspapers and hear our boys expatiate scientifically on straight lefts and right-handed swings to the jaw, and see them come home from school with swollen mouths, bragging happily of having been knocked out by their best friend. But the writer of this might boast of having published the first description of a boxing match that was ever printed in Danish, a thing unheard of, and unseemly, brought home from that terrible land, America, no more than just twenty years ago!

Bicycling, boxing, football, every kind of game and outdoor sport, engross the attention of the younger generation now; as well as rowing and yacht-racing, which are, after all, of longer standing in the land—

[1] This is what the Danes call a cloth cap.

and some of the older generation are just as engrossed in them; for the pioneers, they who played a part in introducing sport from England and who are a generation behind now, the veterans, with an honourable *training* (who now hears any longer that the word is English?)—they have memories to look back on. *They* remember how in their day sport was looked upon as useless, extravagant, and offensive. Would sport be considered extravagant and offensive now? Rather has it become with some people a religion, to a certain extent an obsession; with others a matter of life and death, which is contrary to its spirit. It has taken huge strides, whichever way one likes to look at it, in these last twenty to thirty years. The horizon, the capacity for living, has been enlarged, more than most people know. The bicycle opened up the highways as the motor car later flung wide the approach to the country; the rowing-boat opened up the waters; nature and a feeling for the open entered into the towns again.

Conversely, the culture of the towns took possession of the country. There are no great all-embracing sports clubs or stadiums in the country, but as you pass by the villages now you can see the young farm workers kicking the ball about between the goals, one village team against another, with bare pink knees and running like leopards—the same villages where, thirty years ago, the country lads could be seen standing rooted to the ground like wooden images behind the ditches, gazing vacantly after those tall daft bicycles on which the ridiculous people from the towns whizzed by. Where is the farm-hand out in the country now who hasn't a bicycle?

When you see such a game of football with the sons of the soil in action, you can imagine yourself in ancient Greece, or your thoughts go back to the young, highly-trained, emulative heroes of the Sagas.

Yes, and here there is a point of view which a Danish man might desire to put forward. Possibly it is only a hypothesis, but it concerns the origin of the English style, the English cult of the body, which has in our day spread all over the world.

The powerful instinct for games with which every Englishman is born goes back to a common Scandinavian origin, or so I picture it. For centuries this instinct was preserved in the British Isles, and only there, while it was extinguished in the Scandinavian countries as well as elsewhere in Europe. This holds true with the possible exception of the sport of skiing in Norway, and, far afield, the spoiled sport of bull-fighting in Spain. As a sport this now merely barbaric pastime, mingled with traditions from the Roman gladiatorial arena, dates back to the West Goths and was undoubtedly brought south by them from more northerly regions. If one may trust the evidence of the Gundestrup bowl, bull-fighting in a primitive form was in use in Jutland in prehistoric times—a Cimbrian pastime which was connected with ancient Jutland cattle-breeding. But in the age we live in this ancient instinct,

common to the whole of the North, sport for sport's sake, has returned to Scandinavia again, even as it has spread over all the world.

In all probability, the noble English sports of horse-racing and riding to hounds, various ball games, the English affection for hard bodily exercise and movement in the open air as a whole, came over to the Isles with the Normans, perhaps even earlier with the Saxons and Jutes. In any case, we know from the Sagas that play and games of a similar kind, in an undeveloped stage, were in use in the Scandinavian countries in olden days.

The Saga people were strong horse-breeders, ball-players, and swimmers during their comparatively peaceful intervals at home in their own places, when they were not at sea or away at their neighbour's burning him in his bed. In battle they meant business, and here their dazzling skill as warriors came into its own. Every day they worked off steam in games, and in playing it might easily chance that a man swung his bat, not against the ball, but against his opponent's head, with fatal results. Cases are known; the horse-fighting often ended unhappily with dissension among the owners. There is a tale of a couple of young hot-heads who knocked each other's pates in with their horses' bits. Their swimming contests were hard on those who took part in them, according to our notions; their custom was to hold each other under water as long as one of the parties could stand it, and longer. It is said of Olaf Trygveson that he punished a swimmer who threatened another man's life in such a way as almost to drown him: diamond cut diamond. Manly games were coarse and wild in those days, but they were games, just as the Saga people, our forefathers, were big children.

This same bent for games, the child's heart which has not yet hardened, was preserved in English customs for centuries in more civilized forms, while the Continental world outgrew all play and became old and staid.

What was the reason, why did games and manly sports disappear from the everyday life of our fathers and grandfathers? Ah, the causes have long roots that go back deep into history, but they came to light in the ordinary social atmosphere of only a generation ago, in the form of a restriction resting upon all things, a condition of restraint, a taboo, that children received from their parents, and parents from a discipline that emanated from officialdom, the Church, and the professional classes. It arose from the necessity for being staid, from fear of "childishness," and from suspicion of any form of pleasure. That was what it had come to, and that it was the work of the Church cannot be concealed, the heavy, dark, religious constraint of the Middle Ages that still brooded over people's minds. The day of prohibitions, the Sabbath, had in some places, one might say, extended not only to the whole week, but to whole centuries. The age before was sedate and had to be so, it was a part of good manners to be slow, solemn, as creatures

are that wear long clothes. There was a picture of a corpse in every house.

Somehow or another the old innocent open-air games survived in England, although there were prohibitions enough there. The same country gave a name to the Puritans' strict views, so hostile to all the joy of life. But there was no getting the better of an old-established independence among the people. The otherwise punctilious churchgoer would have his game on a holiday, his races, and a good boxing-match; for that was what he wanted. And when the age of solemnity began to relax its hold on Europe, England was in a position to give the old forgotten games from the childhood of the race back to it again. Better gift was never given. The soul of our forefathers returned with it.

Traces of the old Northern games, which afterward developed into sports in England, could perhaps be found in this country, here and there, in an elementary form. There is tip-cat, undoubtedly very ancient, and, as I have attempted to prove elsewhere, related to other peoples' old folk-games. When I was a boy in Jutland we used to play a game we modestly called *sow-in-the-hole*. It was played with sticks and a ball which had to be driven into a hole in the ground and it brings both hockey and bandy to mind, not to mention the noble English game of golf, which is so fashionable and which even statesmen play. If golf is compared with sow-in-the-hole, this will at once give the proportion between Great Britain and the little old country of Denmark.

A historical investigation embracing the whole theme of the origin of games and sports ought to be instituted.

The world grew younger after English games had prevailed everywhere. With them came English clothes, and in reality of course we returned with them to our forefathers' simple unaffected tastes, to open-air clothes in contrast to the refined elegance of France, which was suited to a *salon*—an elegance that is now seen only on the stage or in the servants' hall. What we in Denmark with a certain contemptuous significance stamped as *frieze*—the home-spun clothes of the peasantry—this was the very thing that achieved honour and glory again.

For the English fashion, with its tweeds and homespuns, gaiters and cloth headgear—what else was it, to begin with, but the *gentle man* from the country, the free, well-set-up, and well-dressed home-born Englishman, who took the dress his fathers had been wont to wear with him, from the landed property he had inherited, to London, and from London to the Colonies! Now all the world dresses like an Englishman from the provinces. A peasant's and a nobleman's taste are united in English fashions.

The checked English clothes, once so ridiculed, are probably directly descended from the old Northern primitive loom with its coarse woollen

weave and its predilection for diamond patterns, which is so pronounced in the Scotch plaid. The Scottish national costume with its skirt and bare legs seems to be a late relic of the Bronze Age period. In the Copenhagen Museum of Northern Antiquities garments from that period are preserved, things found in oak chests where they have been kept for three thousand years—common cross-woven frieze, and no trousers. If there really is any connexion, it must be admitted that the tradition in the British Isles is of a venerable age and has been maintained faithfully, and hardily!

On cold winter days here in the neighbourhood of Copenhagen, you may see boy scouts airing their bare legs on bicycles in the frosty wind —our far-away forefathers' hardiness which has returned to the country after having made a long detour, through thirty centuries, round by the British Isles and back again. Here the circle, relationship in the past and in the present, is closed.

In this country we are, understandably enough, more disposed to remind the world of this relationship than are the English. We have to ask to be taken for what we are, poor relations, who with fearful pride brag of ancient kinship which in fact no longer exists—or does a little still survive?

If we as Danes smarten ourselves up, and if we go back to national instincts and sources, then I think it does. After all, not much more than a thousand years divides us from the time when English and Danish history ran side by side and at one time was identical. The race has a common origin; and even though language and much else have become different in course of time, the dimensions especially, yet in the depths of mind, beyond speech and that which is superficially called consciousness, I believe there are fundamental traits of character that unite peoples of the same origin, though they have become divided and different as, for instance, the horse and the tapir.

In that period of Danish literature known as the *Romantic*, which occupied most of the nineteenth century and is bright with such names as Oehlenschläger and Hans Andersen, the latter known and appreciated in England too, the new vein that was discovered was in opposition to the dryasdust formalism of the eighteenth century. It was a shaft that led down to the old forgotten national reserves of antiquity, the old pagan symbols and myths, all the oldest traditions common to the whole of Scandinavia, which were dug up again. Current literary histories never have anything about this movement but that it was introduced into this country from Germany, and that we *got* it from Germany, *via* Germany in an adaptation stamped by German *Geist;* but in reality the romantic movement in European literature had its origin in England. It would not be difficult to trace it, from Shakespeare, Ossian, Percy's collection of English ballads, later from Byron and Sir Walter Scott, to most of what was written in Germany in the

earliest part of the nineteenth century. Hence, in a second-hand form, the movement was introduced into Denmark. No wonder that Oehlenschläger ended by rebelling against his teachers, for he himself was nearer to the source. The Romantic movement was actually a distant message from our origin, a faint echo, which we received through German interpretation, of English folklore—that harked back to our own shores! This is how I would like to have it. Prove that it is not correct!

It may here be recalled that Grundtvig derived a vital impulse from England. He, too, instinctively rejected Romanticism in its German form and went straight to the source. The Grundtvigian *dauntlessness* in its original form, in its way prepares for the general popular liberation which has since found vent in the games movement. Niels Bukh is the flower of the High School movement!

These outlined observations on style and tradition must not close without calling to mind another movement which had its starting-point in England and for which the thanks of Denmark and every civilized country are due to England: that great turning-point in the nineteenth century, the complete change in style in intellectual respects—the influence of the teacher of evolution, Charles Darwin.

Darwin is neither "modern" nor really "fashionable" at the moment. I know that there are people who, with an incomprehensible poverty of spirit, exult that he is old-fashioned. There shall be no more Darwinism, they say, no heredity, no evolution, a denial the old black enemies of light are more than eager to pounce on as the last word in science. To such people there is only this to be said, that if they prefer to live in darkness, why, let them stay there.

But Darwin and Darwinism are not antiquated. The beautiful explanation of man's origin, the relationship between the animals and man, every living creature on the earth to be apprehended as a step in the progress of your soul—never shall teaching like that be too old! The eyes of all the nations shall for all time be turned toward England in gratitude to the country that bred a genius like Charles Darwin.

Taken as a whole, the nineteenth century stands as that period in the history of man in which he returns to Nature.

But *constant* man never was; he may forsake her again!

SWEDEN

Introductory Note

IN COMMON with most European countries Sweden fell under the spell of France in the eighteenth century, and that influence persisted so that fashions, manners, and literature all bore unmistakably the French stamp. It is noteworthy, however, that at the time when the French mode was at its strongest Dalin brought out a periodical in imitation of Addison's *Spectator*—one of the many that cropped up in various European countries about this time—and this had an effect no less important within its limits than that of its great original. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Gothic school arose. This sought to break away from foreign influence and to hark back to the common traditions of the great Gothic race, building upon it a new literature that should be truly in keeping with the spirit of the northern lands and not merely imitative. It is not surprising that this healthy movement triumphed over the exotic literature that had preceded it, and to it we owe the very live work that has been produced in recent times.

* * *

HARALD HJÄRNE

HARALD GABRIEL HJÄRNE was born at Klastorp in 1848. He became Professor of History at Uppsala and died in 1922. His writings included studies of law, politics, and history.

The present essay has been translated specially for this volume by Elizabeth Sprigge from *Svenska Dagbladet*, February 13, 1898.

ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

SOME doubt has been expressed as to the value which ought to be attached to academic, scientific, or other kinds of schools for higher education.

Such good as they have been able to accomplish has been derived from the innate vitality proper to their efforts in the measure in which the school has been able to forget itself and its corporate interest in the presence of a more serious claim. The scholastic element has constituted its limitation, the germ of its transitoriness and, at times, the leaven which has raised up certain pompous pretensions to elevations

momentarily dazzling, but within a short time has collapsed along with them to the most ludicrous flatness.

The schoolmaster's calling is beyond question both noble and worthy of respect. To be and to know oneself a true scholar is a touchstone of modesty and in many ways an excellent preparation for wielding oneself the master's fescue.

Now each of these categories possesses its own natural and proper scope within territories quite other than the arena of liberal and absolute intellectual culture, where its plenary representatives so easily stumble and cut rather poor figures.

It would therefore be unjust and unhistorical to undervalue the merits and the contributions to culture even of restricted researches.

Free research has grown up by degrees out of the restricted. Moreover, in a sense, it may be said that all education ultimately rests upon a basis of control. To this day (and surely from henceforth until the coming of the millennium) the child must enter his path of inquiry under pedagogic guidance. And for him who never reaches intellectual maturity, who is at no time able to accept the proffered gift of freedom, it is a boon to exercise such powers as have been bestowed upon him at least for a controlled flight from a given fixed starting-point to which he can return in safety as soon as it begins to feel dreary and chill out in the open. What logical force, what ingenious penetration has not the rational treatment of dogma according to prescribed methods shown itself able to foster, let its precedent scientific probation have been never so lax or non-existent.

It would be a pity if such a course were to be deprived of the old-established title of honour, "scientific," merely because our most modern research did not stand sponsor at its baptism. Not seldom has the fervent belief in parental authority positively incited to the most break-neck speculative adventures, since the audacious one has always been certain that, just when giddiness assailed him in presence of the height of absurdity, he would hastily be taken up in a warm and comforting embrace.

Out of a field of inquiry thus limited has grown from the beginning the whole fabric of our modern university system—and the traces of this origin are still very far from having disappeared.

Ever since Abélard, one of the boldest among the faithful, set up his disputational headquarters on the hill of Ste. Geneviève, ever since, down in all the faculties of the Latin Quarter, doctors, masters, and bachelors from morn till eve expounded their prescribed text-books and determined and resolved hair-splitting questions in accordance with the appointed rules of logic—ever since then, and right up to our own

day, has the spirit of scholasticism had its immortal models to look up to and to follow.

Between the schools on either side, their heads, their partisans, and alumni, there was mighty strife over the chief prizes of scholarly orthodoxy, over the proclamation of doctrines as new obligatory dogmas, over the homage of the troops of young scholars, over degrees and professorships and rectorates and decanates and university statutes. It was a vivid and tumultuous life, a medley of dialectic and scuffling, of pronounced conflicts of doctrine and cautious attempts at compromise, of the narrow-minded prejudice of masterful natures and the loyalty of the rising generation.

How many an imperial chancellor or apostolic notary, how many a bishop, prebendary, or quiet friar in the remote quarters of Christendom could not in old age delight in memories of student days when he took part in the defence of the faculty's privileges against the armed envy of the burghers or, called out with the rest of the underlings, even went so far as to cast some particles of the world-famous Parisian street mud at the rivals of a revered master.

But it went ill for him who, in the heat of battle, chanced to forget the barriers erected once for all against the lively play of only half emancipated thought. He must be prepared for excommunication, confinement to his cloister or, it might be, the heretic's stake—vigorous and consistent methods of punishment which only an emasculated spirit of the times has exchanged for reduction of salary, denied or delayed promotion, and other petty devices of a false philanthropy's concern for moral betterment. From these times we have still retained so many of the venerable customs, terms, and titles of our university life as yet to lend it a good deal of the glitter of antiquarian and romantic interest.

The schools with their internecine feuds are still far from being extinct. The old ones flourish and new ones arise. The reputation of mastery, whether in the domesticity of his own schoolroom or outside in the whole republic of learning, is now, just as of old, most readily attained by means of the discreet and thorough limitation of the field of vision to cocksure little systems which the aspirants are able to teach without too much scruple and without testing their assumptions. New dogmas are put forward and decreed from time to time, although less perhaps within the realm of theology (where the ancient ones seem to suffice even for the requirement of the younger generation) than on the firmer seeming ground of specialized science. And the logic of the schools is the constantly replenished arsenal from which the modern art of disputation derives its keenest weapons. *Qui bene distinguit bene docet.* The subtle dissection of the idea is an excellent and profitable sport, even though the idea itself be taken on trust from the treasuries of the world of dogma.

Everything in its place—that is a golden rule which has shaped all

our thriving science and is moreover worth taking out of the stuffy school atmosphere into the fresh air.

But, alas, there are people so constituted as never to be quite satisfied even with the most beautiful of educational dogmas and school methods. These cannot forget that academic tradition looks backward to a yet remoter dawn—when the truth was indefatigably sought but could never be prisoned in a cage, when no hypotheses were left unquestioned and even the very instruments of thought were incessantly scrutinized, reforged, and exchanged one with another.

In the Grove of Akademos, that of the vast unknown, there met daily, for the untroubled exercise of their intellectual gifts, ardent men and youths whom the higher powers had freed from the toils and prejudices of the beaten track. They would neither bow down submissively before the prophetic utterances of a father of learning nor, in sophistical self-vindication, represent weak arguments as strong, black and foul as fair and white. They would but continue in peace among themselves those discussions which their departed friend was wont, for the demonstration of his own and his fellow citizens' profound ignorance of the mysteries of life, to open in street and market place. No laurels were awarded to putative victors in the ever shifting strife of thought. No leader was raised to a golden throne by the delirium of an admiring crowd. Over the symposium, constantly renewed with fresh energies, floated the healthy irony of the intellect which held the great questions always open, unperceived drew on each participant gradually to disclose and develop his own genius and, at the most, clothed their surmises of communal discoveries in the garb of half historic myth—lest the ardour of their quest should be abated and degenerate into the torpor of visionary conquest or, on calmer reflection, be regretted as either too Dionysian or too Apolline.

To solid citizens and hidebound educationists the whole of this life presented itself as a colossal scandal. In their eyes it was nothing but miscellaneous talk, hither and thither, without tangible result or any proposal which could conveniently be adjusted to the educational system and the party programme. Or was it a cunning conspiracy, an insolent mockery? He who was not fit for initiation into these mysteries felt himself permanently exposed to disagreeable mystifications. But, in the dialogues of Plato which reflect the curriculum and scholastic practice of the oldest academy, a late posterity has recovered books symbolic of the veritable and unhampered quest for truth.

What though the originator of these wonderful colloquies himself, in the weariness of old age, let himself be tempted sometimes to descend to the arid tone of established schools, what though slow-witted imitators and unsophisticated barbarian pedants have manufactured, as a speci-

men of their skill, a dogmatic doctrine of ideas from the scattered glimpses which he in the fulness of his power gathered from a living and eternal world of truth, but had never the heart to profane by intrusion and vain show? The memory, the example which he has left behind him of the reciprocal self-help of noble ideas still remains as a monument for all time.

The actual ideals are not there to be slavishly worshipped or imitated but to stimulate and to warm. Their name is profaned if they are invoked to condemn the living by their demands and to close the path of progress.

It is in our days that this beaten-path method has achieved its full glory. It has made its way into, and is forced upon our high schools which least of all are capable of reform into free associations of the disinterested lovers of learning, into associations such as those vanished ones which existed under the protection of Akademos. The honourable task of socially useful industry seeks its equipment from teaching readily applicable, and the basis of such teaching is the dogma, the established doctrine which there is no longer time to test but which must quickly be acquired and brought to bear. Yet there is surely no need, on that account, for every sort of dogma of which the passing party interest of the community or the state has become enamoured to be transmuted into academic lessons, nor for inculcating a belief in dogmas unnecessary for the lesson's due reception and application—that lies outside the scope of academic doctrine and the jurisdiction of academic authority.

And behind the cramming factories and warehouses a little modest corner may surely too be vouchsafed for a few moments' quiet discussion of the meaning, the application, and the value of the lessons and the dogmas.

The too extravagant aims have already been eliminated in advance. For the cosmic conceptions of heroic philosophy have long since been split up into a multitude of cautious attempts in various branches of research; and are not replaced by the abstract formulae which, in the imagination of the authorities, have succeeded to the names and inheritance of the heroes. But within each special territory is found, nevertheless, room enough for those who, apart from all schools and scholiasts, will give themselves the trouble to think on their own account about the peculiar problems of scholarship behind the primary object of the knowledge acquired.

To this extent, young as well as old, they may feel themselves protected against the anxious interference of social utility and solemn rectitude. In this way they do not set themselves up as superfine "intellectual aristocrats" or "supermen" who adopt an attitude of indifference to contemporary everyday work and effort.

But, if they be in earnest, they can within themselves, (without preaching about themselves in the market place) at least dream about an *aristodiakonia,* an endeavour to serve the best, to serve the truth even if it never be attained, with their best powers of thought and with singleness of heart. Among themselves they make no division into different sects, into atheists and pietists, into loyalists and socialists, or whatever may be the curious and trivial designations of heresy or titles of faith. And should they be assailed by the guardians of alien interests, by demagogues, red, black, or grey, by nominees of authority in ministerial uniform or sacerdotal vestments, by worried fathers of families and bringers-up of children—then they call to all their adversaries collectively, smiling but with emphasis, their: *"procul este, profani!"*

In view of the problems of such a task the desire to follow or to found schools loses its attraction and appears rather ridiculous. There the marks of distinction between masters and pupils fall away. There nothing exists but a quest in which each takes part according to his talent. And the way to this task is opened not by waiting upon useless forms and "reforms" but by the steadfast wish to make use of the resources which every true university—even a Swedish one—has already within its reach.

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SELMA LAGERLÖF

Selma Lagerlöf, like many of the other contemporary writers of Scandinavia, forsook the realism of her earliest work and evolved a mystical and elevated style of great charm. Her romance *Gösta Berling's Saga* has been translated into twelve languages. Other books are *Jerusalem* and *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils.* Miss Lagerlöf was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1909. She was born in 1858.

The following essay is taken from the translation of *Mårbacka* by Velma Swanston Howard and is reprinted by permission of Messrs. T. Werner Laurie.

NOONING

LIEUTENANT LAGERLÖF believed that children, in order to grow up healthy and strong and become useful and capable men and women, should above all things acquire the habit of nooning. With that object in mind, always, after the midday meal, he would take the two youngest children down to the farm-office, which was in another building a few steps from the house.

The office was a large room, and probably looked about the same as in the days of the Mårbacka clergymen, when it had been their study. At the far end, under a window, there was a black leather lounge, and before it an oblong table. Along one side-wall stood a bedstead, a black leather-seated chair, a large black walnut writing table, and a high chest of drawers, while at the other side stood another bed and black leather chair and a tile stove. On the wall, beyond the stove, hung three fowling pieces, a seal-skin game-bag, a large horse-pistol, a couple of powder horns, and a fencing foil which crossed a broken sabre. In the midst of this armoury rested a huge pair of elk antlers. Down by the door, on one side, there was a stationary clothes cupboard, on the other side, a bookcase. At the bottom of the cupboard reposed the Lieutenant's iron-bound oak chest, the one the Paymaster of the Regiment had used, and which was a bit charred at one corner.

In the bookcase the Lieutenant kept his big ledgers, and there, also, were the school books of two generations. Many annuals of the *European Feuilleton* were crowded in with Homer, Cicero, and Livy. Histories of Peter the Great and Frederick the Wise had been relegated hither on account of their common drab cardboard bindings, also the works of Wilhelm von Braun—though not because of their covers but for other reasons. On the floor lay surveyors' instruments from the time the Lieutenant had assisted in the shifting of boundary lines; also some boxes of fishing tackle and odds and ends.

First thing, on coming into the office, the Lieutenant and his little daughters had to drive out the flies. Doors and windows were thrown wide open. The Lieutenant caught up a towel for the chase, and the little girls took off their aprons and went to beating the air. They climbed on to chairs and tables, hunted and slashed, while the buzzing flies flew hither and yon, as if determined not to go. However, in the end they were cleared out, and windows and doors were closed.

But there was one fly they called the old office fly; she was used to the daily chase, and knew enough to keep out of the way while it went on. When all was quiet and peaceful again, she would come forth from her hiding place and seat herself on the ceiling.

No fresh chase was started for her. The Lieutenant and the children knew that she was too canny for them. They could never get rid of her! So they went on to the next thing to be done before nooning. The girls arranged two leather pillows and a down pillow on the lounge as a head-rest for the Lieutenant; whereupon he stretched himself out, shut his eyes, and simulated sleep.

Then, with wild shrieks, the children threw themselves upon him. He tossed them off as if they were little balls of yarn, but back they came like playful puppies. They pulled his whiskers, ruffled his hair, and clambered up on to the sofa, playing all sorts of pranks on him.

When the Lieutenant thought the children had had enough of play he clapped his hands once, and said:

"It's over now."

Little good that did! The children kept on; again and again they crawled up on to the sofa, were flung off, and came bounding back—shrieking and making a fearful racket.

When that had gone on for some little time, the Lieutenant clapped twice and said: "It's quite over now."

Nor did that have any effect. The same performance was repeated amid shrieks and laughter, until the Lieutenant presently clapped his hands three times, and said:

"Now it is really and truly over."

The two children instantly hushed their noise, and each crept into her own bed to sleep.

After a little the Lieutenant began to snore. His snores were not very loud, but they were enough to keep the two children, who were to acquire the habit of nooning, awake.

The youngsters were not allowed to get out of bed or speak to each other, but had to lie perfectly still. Their eyes, meanwhile, wandered round the room. Gazing at the rag mats on the floor, they recognized their mother's and their aunt's old dresses, which had been cut up for carpets. They looked at the portrait of General Malmberg, which hung on the wall between two battle canvases, at the ink-well and pen, at the antlers and game-bags, at the foil and the famous gun called the "harekiller." They traced the figures in the quilt, they counted the stars on the wall-paper, the nail-heads along the floor, and the checks in the curtains. The hour seemed dreadfully long! They heard the merry voices of the other children, who were so big they did not have to take a midday nap, but ran about—happy and free—devouring cherries and gooseberries and green apples!

The sole hope of the two little girls was the "office fly." She buzzed and buzzed round the Lieutenant's face, making as much noise as she could. If only she kept at it long enough she'd wake him up!

* * *

PER HALLSTRÖM

PER AUGUST LEONARD HALLSTRÖM, a member of the Swedish Academy, was born at Stockholm in 1866. He has published poems, travel sketches, novels, short stories, and plays, as well as a translation of the works of Shakespeare into Swedish.

The following essay has, by the author's permission, been translated by Elizabeth Sprigge expressly for this volume.

TWO NEW CHAPTERS FOR "GULLIVER'S TRAVELS"

THERE is a splendid and a strange book, written to be the sharpest of lessons for adults and those of ripe age, but whose fate, with us at least, has been to live more especially as a book of diversion for children.

It has befallen many other works of literature thus to change their public. Fashions for the little ones seem to become outmoded even more rapidly than others, but our grandfathers' and grandmothers' best and most durable clothes are always big enough and often tempting to put on and to play grown-up in. The folk tales to which the children still listen wide-eyed, which thrill them with delicious fear and soothe them with the relief of a happy ending, are no doubt the same from which, in the past, their elders have enjoyed the same sensations with the same unquestioning seriousness. Though sentiment and fantasy have suffered change in the world of experience, the roots in the soil have remained the same. For them springs up still the magic forest with the same enchanting whisper and the same shining promise of spring, and in the very midst of the gloom the golden hazel twig tinkles and sings above the hidden palace of Prince Hatt.

To *Gulliver's Travels* this interpretation is not applicable. Swift's witty and terrible satire, the cage of the most relentless logic, instinct with the gloomiest view of human nature, a cage which nevertheless his mighty spirit burst asunder, have we not perhaps fortunately outgrown it? And it is well for the children that they have not yet grasped its import. That which has made the tale enjoyable for them is that the author in the midst of his indignation, his scorn, his secret and harrowing sorrow was so full of life that he could not fail to bestow it. Just as in winter, when the cold seems to have put everything to sleep, the very frost becomes creative and conjures up a marvellous growth of needle-sharp crystals on stalk and straw, a film of glistening ice roses on the window-pane, so has he filled his grim book with fantasy.

In its precision, its mysterious and unhurrying power, this fantasy seems to work by the laws governing the forces of the mineral kingdom; it embroiders a lace pattern with the same interest with which it blasts a rock. The children look at the pattern, are astonished, amused, and enticed by it, and do not notice that the ground under them is mined. They are not, however, quite without misgiving. They suspect that here there has been question of other things than dwarfs and giants, people of the air and the unpronounceable Houyhnhnms.

I remember how, at my own first reading of the book when I was nine years old, I felt a disquieting uncertainty about the meaning, a

doubt which made my ears seem bigger than other people's—perhaps, too, I had just had my hair cut. I was obliged to air my trouble in the playground during a recess to some older school-fellows, and one after the other they explained the riddles of the book to me confidently and vociferously.

Lilliput, they said, with the modest patriotism natural to their age, Lilliput is Sweden, Brobdingnag is Russia, that is perfectly clear, Laputa is Germany where they are so learned, and their very grammar requires a tremendous acuteness, "*verstanden worden zu sein.*" But in presence of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos their officiousness was checked, utterly abashed by the proximity of an awe-inspiring seventh-form boy, who listened to us smilingly, ready to join in. We should not have grown much wiser even if the prefect had not at that moment rung the bell at the class-room window and called us in to our lesson. Ours perhaps was "history and geography" and that of the seventh-form boy "anthropology." I remember that we let him have some snowballs in the back at parting. I was not satisfied with the explanations, but could find no others for myself. Neither was I, in fact, entirely pleased with the book itself, although in that respect I was an exception.

Thus it was a couple of years before I came to read it again, and by that time I had become just as wise as anyone else as to its import.

Lilliput was the whole of the known world, seen through the wrong end of a telescope; Brobdingnag the same through a magnifying glass. The episode of Laputa, with its less concentrated outlook and its somewhat antiquated buffoonery, scoffed at all human wisdom and learning. In the land of the Houyhnhnms I recognized with a certain excitement the dream of nature's inherent pristine goodness, in contrast with the body politic and civilization as it must have been in the eighteenth century with its intense pursuit of good and evil, at once fair and deadly, ridiculous and sublime.

He who thus dreamed did so without hope; in the background his keen and far-seeing eyes perceived the Yahoos, and his loathing of his kind and of himself found witty expression so monstrous and annihilating as to suggest insanity. When it laid hold of him, then he was outside Gulliver's four worlds, from which he saw no other way in life. Then perhaps it was that Jonathan Swift felt all the peace, all the visionary happiness, if we may so call it, which was granted to his passionate and earnest nature with its inflexible craving for truth, its savage satire, and its agonizing inarticulate heart.

One thought only struck me as perhaps new—I do not know whether it be so. In the comparative estimate of all mankind which he sets forth I missed one important aspect which, in his hands, would have afforded opportunity for much profundity, much ingenuity, much of his tight-lipped and fantastic humour. I have returned to this thought,

and out of it have come two additional chapters to his book, not, naturally, as he would have written them, but as I have sat and dreamed them over his mighty work. Let him who would read them first have *Gulliver's Travels* in his mind. It is Gulliver who speaks.

I

In Lilliput

There was a peculiarity about life in Lilliput which, from the first moment, absorbed my attention and sorely tried it ere I was prepared with the natural explanation. I must take a little time and perhaps appear diffuse in order to make myself rightly understood.

As I have already related, the stature of the inhabitants was scarcely a twelfth part of our own. The measure of the tallest of them, therefore, was about six inches. When among the men it occasionally reached or exceeded this figure, the possessor was considered to be particularly distinguished by nature. It was not possible for this to escape his own notice. Were his fortune and rank such as to support an arrogant attitude toward life, nothing can convey an idea of the proud and jaunty bearing which resulted. It was a joy to watch him, and this I could well contrive to do if I laid my head upon the ground. Perhaps, however, this was outdone in charm by the manner in which those who were especially undersized bore themselves in the like conceited posture. With stiffened backs and chins cocked up they fixed their eagle glance upon such as they addressed, as it were defying all and sundry to venture a suspicion that they were otherwise than of agreeable middle height.

Nevertheless the motions of them all were, to my eye, in natural relation to their height, so swift that the glance could hardly follow. I was often compelled to have recourse to reflection and previous experience in order to comprehend that which passed, when a state of mind was changed to its opposite by some circumstance which quite escaped my notice.

A gentleman in the street, lately brooding and contemplative or in the depths of distress, might suddenly go his way, relieved and easy, ready to embrace his entire world in the sunshine. This might arise from the fact that he was suffering from a cold and, unseen by me, had sneezed or blown his nose. Or he might be going along in hopeless love-sickness, meet its object, and from one smile obtain the promise of an eternity of joy. A boy might stop in the midst of his dance beside the gutter and yell with wide-open mouth. An officer who but now was the very flower of deadliness might droop and shrink into himself. The boy had received a box on the ear from the butcher who had heard what he was not meant to hear, namely who it was who

shouted the naughty word, and the officer had failed to win recognition from his colonel.

Such matters often cost me pains to reckon out, but there were degrees of difficulty in everything.

Thus, for example, I could follow even with ease while a miser settled his account, or a poor man bought shoes, while a child gave up an ill-gotten toy, a politician admitted a mistake, or an innocent person was acquitted by the court. It held good again in the getting rid of a beggar, in passing judgment on a friend who has just left the company, in the educating of general opinion, or the courting of a tavern wench, in quitting a spy-hole or making a good bargain; although I could distinguish neither the hands nor the feet, to say nothing of the honest countenances. At such times it would all make the same dream-like impression upon me as when one contemplates bees and wasps in a parterre. One hears them hum and observes them at rest but comprehends not how they have suddenly arrived and suddenly vanished, whence, whither, nor why.

By degrees it dawned upon me that the activity of these small creatures indicated a conception of time completely different from my own.

How this last is computed I know not, but it has taken its measure from our habits and the span of our life.

The Lilliputians manifestly bore themselves in this respect as if hours were days, for they resembled us in all but size. They lived their lives with the same effort, the same prudent reflection as we, with the like sharp strife of conscience and the same conflict between desire and aversion. Enlightenment now came to me regarding many things, among the rest of a seemingly vast difference between us and them.

The sun, which shone over Lilliput and cast such short shadows, set there no sooner than elsewhere. On the little sun-dials in their gardens the time drew its tiny blue circle from morn till eve no less heedfully than with us. But even as it would be impossible for us, anywhere in the neighbourhood of the pole, where the day at midsummer endures for twelve times twelve hours, to deal with so much blessing at a stretch, no more could we expect it of the Lilliputians. Midday sleep was therefore a strictly enforced regulation of the State. Their very eminent scientists and doctors were for ever devising for them new and mutually contradictory laws. They did so with a punctilio and dictatorial air which remained always the same, and with a comprehensive understanding of human nature which, in that region, a peculiarly rapid development rendered ever more incontrovertible and more complete.

A special police force clad in night-caps and under the control of "The Ministry for Sun, Moon, Stars, and Belfries" saw to the exact

observance by all men of the ordinances. The sun was observed through blackened glasses and maintained in excellent condition, the stars similarly through clear ones, and from the belfries was rung the signal for dressing and undressing. Transgressions were denounced, and a kind of sleeping-house of correction, maintained by the parish, furnished good or bad but always hygienic beds, compulsory night-gowns, opium drops, and even shower baths and small saluting cannon for awakening.

In the past the normal day had been determined as something over one hour and the time for rest as about one half of that. With growing enlightenment the arrangement had been altered, sometimes to the reverse, sometimes back again to the same, sometimes to something else. Each new system was met with hostility by the selfish and the prejudiced. But by dint of canvassing it gained ground, and its inventor was honoured at length as a benefactor of mankind and a hero. They were celebrated by statues of somewhat above life-size, in a recumbent posture, but not asleep; on the contrary preternaturally wakeful. They often contrived to look vastly imposing. Upon the circumstance I have indicated rests the explanation that all ill-health was held to have its source in a lack or a superfluity of sleep. The treatment was, for all its ingenuity, essentially simple, and the number of successful cures satisfactory and normal.

In this respect, nevertheless, life in Lilliput presented to me an aspect singular enough.

I would see the city all agog with hurry as though something in the highest degree remarkable were in course of accomplishment and the millennium were at the door. Shoemakers tapped, letter carriers sweated, schoolboys raced, criminals were punished, clergy preached, children were born, and the dead were buried. A little while afterward, just as from all chimneys the daintiest little smoke clouds pushed up into the air and were expunged, all the world sat down to meat and ate as if that were now their sole concern. Yet a little space —just as I had fallen in a muse and then gazed forth after something new—there were shutters over all windows and all doors were shut. Naught but a strangely peaceful droning of snores penetrated the sunny stillness, as it were the sound of a beehive but far more faint; and burglars, too hungry to await the darkness, plied in their stockinged feet their hazardous calling. A moment after, all things were again in agitation, nor can I describe the strange and dream-like condition into which I fell while my day passed in this manner.

On the other hand it might happen that at night I would be roused from sleep by small merry noises, and when I peeped out of my kennel, I found everything lit up and busy. It was agreeable to the course of nature that they should not sleep so long a space as the sun was absent; they must eat to preserve their bodily strength, and the

world must go forward. If at a somewhat lesser rate than during the daylight, life yet throbbed vigorously enough, and the look with which they called moon and stars to witness to this fact exhibited a lofty self-esteem and a triumphant consciousness of human power.

It was now above all that the revellers played their pranks, and the young among them took pleasure and pride in overstepping all limits. Some of them read out from their little papers something which was certainly verse. It was received with applause or a sombre enthusiasm whose import was not wholly lost upon me. Without doubt the poems set forth how fine it was to defy the dictates of the aforesaid ministry, as well as all else which was held rational or right by the wretched night-caps, to lose themselves in an orgy of turbulent and frantic insolence, and riot the night out. Unless he had begun at a tolerably advanced hour, none came so far as to fulfil his promise. By the time it was day he would be lying orderly in his bed, or in one of the sleep correction houses, snoring like the rest or thinking out a new poem.

Naturally, also, the length of life in Lilliput was in the like proportion shorter than ours. Six summers were held to be the limit when a man, full of days and wisdom, closed the eyes which had explored the world's mysteries. In earlier days these elders were asserted to have been the object of every one's respect, and those who benefited by it sought still to maintain this manner of thinking. But the young, who in the space of two summers came to their full strength, loudly protested that they knew much better all that was worth knowing. They looked with scorn upon all further experience as if it were but a useless dilution of the sparkling wine of thought and feeling. This scorn had the peculiarity that it diminished in sharpness the nearer it came to its object. It was mingled then with a half envious, half compassionate perception of its own earlier being.

Nor, so far as I could see, was there any great disparity in wisdom to be considered.

The six-year-olds thought less of themselves, more of their neighbours. They were patient under adversity but timorous about the future, and their backs were somewhat bent, partly from a habit of carrying burdens, partly in fear of what might fall upon them. The two-year-olds, again, did not conceive that any other than themselves thought justly or, for that matter, had the right to think at all. They were in the highest degree outraged by all obstacles to pleasure, not excluding the laws of nature. They detested the present but embraced the morrow with a faith which made them walk with elastic step and uplifted head, prepared to take up a notion and ride it.

Between these extremes the two types merged into one another so smoothly and so gradually that it was impossible to set a finger anywhere and say: "here is the rift." So it was as to nearly everything except the disparity in matters of the heart and the heart's standards.

That was decisive enough, so far as my feeble vision could see and my conjecture trace; there the illusion of time and space might for a moment be suspended. But the course of the whole matter fell quickly into confusion.

When I awoke in the morning I might see a wedding procession winding past with tiny plumes and tiny trains and a faint but most captivating and merry music. It might be at daybreak, golden red, and how unfailing and how lasting must not its beauty seem to those beings. I would see bride and bridegroom exchange glances full of promise for eternity, and I would see them return after a moment, in the same guise, with the shadows before them no shorter than they had lately been behind, but rare and gay in the same splendour. I could shut my eyes to it and when I looked up it would be gone and they also. A few weeks later I might see the woman with a little child which behaved as though it alone existed, suffered need, wailed, and rejoiced with all the pristine passion of its little life. Yet a little while and the child might be blown out like a taper and I see it no more, but only conjecture from the dress and bearing of the parents what had become of it. There was sorrow, and that too passed away, nor could I tell certainly what had become of that.

Or I might see the same two but no longer together, rather each of them with another and very happy, or one of them alone and very unhappy. But in the space of my midday sleep, which I took after the custom there but considerably longer, all could suffer change.

I saw friends become foes even to the length of engaging in close combat. They were then just as impossible for my sight to distinguish as it would perhaps have been for my thought to comprehend the difference between the influences directing them, considered apart from the main distinction: "I and he." I saw lovers by garden walls who met one another as quickly and neatly as it were swallows billing at breeding time. But when I peeped thither again, they would be engaged in bitter reproaches and stamping on the ground.

I saw the funerals of considerable men, heard the town buzzing with their posthumous fame, and followed the broken-hearted kinsfolk on their homeward journey. The sense of mortality took strong hold upon me despite our dissimilar circumstances, and I would become lost in reflections. But, as these with me occupied their accustomed time, it so was that, when I raised my head again, perhaps after hours, a new worthy would stand there explaining to a crowd of people that the former had been in error in all that he had said and done, and that the purity of his intentions was in the highest degree questionable. The relatives seldom interrupted these strictures, occupied as they might well be in contending over the money, possessions, furniture, or shirt buttons which he had left behind. I also saw inconsiderable men drop dead in the street and be carried away. It happened so swiftly

that the notice which the occurrence aroused flamed up and waned while I, with my necessary caution, picked my way over the group in the midst of which, in the confusion, a pickpocket was caught in the very act.

I almost broke myself of looking. I quite broke myself of laughing and weeping. For manifestations of feeling could never learn the measure of Lilliput. They became as the grimaces of a madman behind the shadows of the grating, and yearned after a world which they could understand.

II

In Brobdingnag

After the quickening which my power of observation had obtained in Lilliput touching the conditional nature of the conception of time, it was easy for me to discover in what manner this was transposed in the consciousness of the giants.

Their enormous limbs, in whose veins the blood flowed with no greater haste than in my own, required for their movements a time twelve times as great as did mine. It was the same with all manner of emotions. The consequence was that all their activities conveyed an impression of cold-blooded phlegm which could be provoking, or only peculiar, according to the gravity of their effect upon myself. Hunger or thirst could occasion me real anguish the while my nurse smilingly played with the small doll's portions which were allotted to me. I tried at first from politeness to conceal what I felt behind some droll contrivance. But when the lovable and merry child fell into a fit of laughter so appreciative and so time consuming and, moreover, by reason of the concussion of the air, so perilous for me, I obtained a new notion of the gravity of life and of the levity we call fun. It came about that, because the laughter appeared ever in monstrous exaggeration, this uncouth human peculiarity took on for me a new significance.

All laughter astonished me at its first beginning by reason of the slow facial contortions which preceded it. I could be in doubt for whole moments whether it were not rather weeping which struggled to come forth. I understood for the first time the affinity between these seeming opposites. Both were physical reactions to something which our simple heart did not quickly enough comprehend to make its account with it. It was a matter of hazard which of them should come. I am yet content to watch them hand in hand and hold both of them apart from life. Laughter especially could thus seem to me as

mere folly when it was not cruelty. It wearied me with disgust before a grinning image, a painted clown face.

Meanwhile I observed, apart from my own sufferings, that the people of Brobdingnag by no means found the time slower or more tedious than with us. On the contrary it should have passed considerably faster, since the day afforded only a couple of hours' life. Indeed, in the prodigious and dreaming eyes of the giant folk I seemed to myself to observe more plainly than in any human being amazement at the transitoriness of the day and of the moment.

The sun's ardent but inconsiderable little globe, red for a moment in the morning, a moment in the evening, was swung like a torch over their heads between two darknesses. The frosty briiliance of the moon waxed and waned, the stars danced and quivered. The winds soughed and raged around their way, the seasons rolled by. Flowers nodded to them and were gone, the spring grew sick and yellow and the red blood of autumn passed away. With the years of patriarchs upon their shoulders, the old folk shook their white hairs at the briefness of their innumerable memories. So far as it was possible for me to discover, this race had also at the same time a deeply rooted faith in the imperishableness of their essential being and a disregard of time and of that which appertains to time. This often gave to them both peace and humility.

My veneration for them would have been the greater had I not observed that their levity was altogether in the same proportion and not a little uncouth. Thus the superciliousness with which they watched my own activity vexed me. I made a practice of examining closely that gaze of theirs, somewhat heavy from oft recurring sleep.

Indeed, their slow dignity, so imposing at first even apart from their size, lost a great part of its majesty upon nearer acquaintance and familiarity.

The more than human calm in affliction which distinguished them could only impress me overwhelmingly for a little while. Did one of them put an insult upon another, it was done with such choice consideration of word and method that it seemed as though this must further aggravate the offence. I was at the first no less stimulated by my admiration of the lofty serenity with which the folly was taken on its merits, than encouraged to despise the folly. But while I meditated upon this and had already forgotten the particular instance in thoughts of universal optimism, the crash of a blow would thunder in my ears and, by the time I had collected myself sufficiently to look up, it was as clear as red on white where the blow had fallen. If now they drew knives it was horrible to witness the particularity with which these were directed against the most vulnerable parts, the ferocious tenacity with which they plunged into flesh and blood, not to speak of the sickening and loathsome odour and warmth of the flowing red.

I felt so great a disgust at having the like blood in my own veins that I had no reason to congratulate myself upon my tranquillity.

I soon understood that life in Brobdingnag was as prudently ordered, passed as quickly, and was lived in the same manner as with us, only by the time of other clocks. There as everywhere the theory of the value of life and emotion was one thing and its application another. The former throve best when it came into being in peace.

I have spoken of emotions, and in that matter came upon an exceedingly curious study which it was vouchsafed to me to follow. The face, we are accustomed to say, is the mirror of the soul, but each of us has learned a little, to his detriment as well as to his profit, how hard it is to read in it. The mirror is not very clear, and the reflections change faster than our powers of observation can follow them.

Among the giant folk of Brobdingnag it was not so. A quite ordinary psychologist, such as I, could there imagine himself to be a professor of psychopathy, so confidently could he pronounce an opinion. Must he fall back upon guesses, and it is surprising what tangles one could meet with, he had still time to fashion for them long and imposing scientific words. I do not believe that their face muscles were more mobile than ours, nor their hearts a greater mixture of evil and good, fraud and honesty, ugliness and beauty. I ascribe the richer variety only to better opportunity for observation.

I once saw my nurse's little brother, scarce sixty years old, succumb to the temptation to steal an apple. Despite what seemed to me his already tower-like height, he had not outgrown the immediacy of desire or the uncertainty of control which is found so droll and attractive by older people. I have never, in any theatre, seen expressed such violent and changing feelings, so much nature and so much play as I encountered in this little scene.

The theft in itself was a comedy of character. His mouth watered, his hands trembled, and in the shadow-play of his eyes was depicted the struggle of a soul. I positively heard the thoughts become words in the child's head: "I shall not do it. It is wrong, it is abominable, and I surely am good." Then immediately the interjection: "The apple too is good, juicy, and cool to the mouth. Only think! No one knows about it, and if another comes he will take it, since people are not to be trusted. That would be a shame! Why should not I rather have it myself?" Round these conflicting voices a kind of sleepy drone: "Aahrrr . . . stuff and nonsense, the apple is there to be eaten, I can eat. One just takes it and bites."

Thereupon it was done, and a lusty crunching of teeth in the fruit pulp diffused an odour, fresh but all too powerful, which caused me to sneeze and brought tears into my eyes. Detection followed instantly when the mother came in, and the little one, in the gaiety and guile of his heart, lifted up his apple-tainted mouth to her to kiss. That

which now ensued of falsehood, unaffected sorrow, indignation, good resolutions, and fury over the punishment became too violent and too noisy for my taste. I saw glances which would perhaps have made me fear for the mother's life had it not been that she, who also had an ugly look in her eye, was equal to the emergency.

Alone with him once more, I was witness to his anguish and found it strangely compounded. There was the righteousness of Job in the presence of a misfortune fallen from the clouds. There was abhorrence for apples and for women. There was cold prudence and dismayed contrition, determination not to let himself be caught again, and finally determination to be good. I was all the time careful indeed how I aroused his attention, for in such moments human nature is dangerous and incalculable.

At another time I was witness to a love-scene at court. It was not difficult, for they paid no more regard to me than to a canary in a cage. The lady in question was married but not to the object of her passion, and that lent poetry to the incident. The play of their eyes, imperceptible to others, to me became almost unpleasantly clear, with its long ardent secrecies. I watched the blush, which passed over her cheek at about the same speed as that of spilt wine upon a table-cloth, when she herself became aware of that of which I had already grown weary. In other respects she played admirably the inaccessible whose only wish is to be hopelessly adored. There was something quite sublime in the severity with which she refused him one morning when he would beg of her a rose which she had plucked through the window, evidently without knowing what she should do with it. To me it seemed as big as a cabbage and contained a quantity of dew which I feared to get over me, and with it a ladybird of disagreeable proportions. I duly received upon my bowed head both contents of the disputed flower, while the cavalier got his douche of mere words. My head became cold enough in the draught of the window, and my involuntary scream was made the occasion of much. For while one is fallen into peals of laughter it is easy to let fall a rose for him who will pick it up, and to escape, under cover of laughter, the need to take notice of it.

I caught a cold and, during the ensuing weeks, could enjoy but imperfectly the repetition of similar scenes. The time was very long for me. For them it passed quickly enough and was winged by an increasing intoxication which would not permit conscience to find words. Nevertheless I was all the time able leisurely and duly to observe in the confusion this conscience, as it were an after-dinner speaker who, somewhat offended, stood and waited for a hearing with copious notes in his pocket. We still both coughed and cleared our throats when their passion took the lovers unawares.

This became their excuse and they made it cover a great deal.

Indeed, when at length the conscience was quite politely led up to the high table and had obtained silence around it, it had had leisure to recast its speech from other and loftier points of view. It thundered now of restraint and dissimulation as vanquished adversaries, and drank its toast of congratulations to the dregs. The make-believe must, however, still be kept up and this, to the lady in particular, was the occasion of grievous sufferings and of a pleasure in part defiant. The former he contrived often to put to flight by calling her a tiny creature of air, exalted above earthly cares and earthly gravity. As she was below the common stature, scarcely ten times my height, it was easy for her to believe this. I observed the effect which this representation had upon her movements. I saw her reveal her enchantment in an unpremeditated pose and, almost unconsciously, repeat it immediately after. I saw many other things, tired wrinkles in the smiles, unscrupulousness, cruelty, rapture, and obliviousness of all things. I saw tenderness and kindness which, by reason of their long continuance, would have been sublime, had not the mark of that other remained, as the storm-cloud on the horizon of a clear evening sky.

It was beautiful and compelled respect to see how full these giants were of unselfishness. It could be thus in quite ordinary persons for whole hours reckoned by *my* watch. But it saddened me that I was also able to tell to the minute when the "I" stepped forth again supreme. Owing to that expressive play of feature which was peculiar to them this could make a ghastly impression, as though the room had been darkened by a menacing guest.

I was once beside a death-bed. The struggle occupied many days and, in the course of it, more than one of my meals were neglected, but I almost forgot my privations in the tremendous spectacle. It seemed to me that, when the terrifying noise of storm and breaking seas which was the death-rattle died away and the spirit, incorporeal even here, but yet for me vaster than another's, dissolved into infinite space, it seemed to me then, amid choked voices which resembled the whisper of a swaying wood when the hurricane dies down, that I myself accompanied the departing one and now understood everything—Brobdingnag, Lilliput, my own poor beloved world. I endured as an indignity the consciousness of bodily needs and fought stoutly to hold them off. Silence, stillness, never in that place rightly present to my keen senses, became to me, by contrast with the rest, deep and profound. I gazed up at the faces in the dusk and would have wished to cry: "Brothers"—had I not feared to intrude.

Moments passed, and I began to grow weary but was yet the more ashamed for that.

Then I saw first one glance, then another return to earth, and I read thoughts in every one. They might be of various kinds, sorrow, anxiety, alarm; yet all were cause for me to shudder. They said: *I,*

here am *I* again. What is it that has befallen *me?* It still comes back to that.

The thought might be covert joy: "Now I succeed to his place in the sun." It might be masked and shamefaced guilt: "How much, I wonder, is my share of the inheritance?" It might be a perfectly innocent everyday thought: "It is time to eat and rest oneself; one must keep body and soul together." It dismayed me always, notwithstanding, and made my food bitter and nauseating when I came to it. And when, as my custom was, I took out my watch to see for how long we had thus been free of that pettiness and narrowness, then I checked myself even as the tears sprang forth. This I did in disgust at that which I was about, in abhorrence of what my observation would have told me.

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BENGT LIDFÖRSS

Bengt Lidförss, who was born at Lund in 1868, was Professor of Botany there until his death. At one time he was one of the foremost journalists connected with the Socialist Party. He has written many technical volumes on plant-life, as well as books of a more miscellaneous character.

The following essay, which shows the author's power of investing his subject with interest for the general reader, has been specially translated for this volume by Elizabeth Sprigge.

ALTRUISTS AND CRIMINALS IN THE PLANT WORLD

IN HIS interesting work, *Mutual Aid,* the well-known anarchist Kropotkin has put forward a great many facts, mainly zoological, to show that the struggle for existence is by no means the universally prevailing law of nature which some orthodox Darwinians have wished to make it, but that this factor is very materially qualified and corrected by the mutual help which the impartial observer cannot fail to perceive in the animal kingdom, as well as among mankind in a natural state. What particularly incited Kropotkin to this important contribution was his indignation that the heartless law of the extermination of the weak should be urged as the basis of all social progress, and he shows therefore by a multitude of striking examples how, even in the animal world, co-operation and organization often place the weak in a position to defy and defeat the stronger; how seagulls and terns collectively put to flight the strongest birds of prey, how the wild dogs of Asia, when in packs, overcome both bear and tiger, and how the

parrots, thanks to a well-organized spy system, can completely outwit the European settler and, when a favourable moment occurs, despoil his plantations in a trice.

Kropotkin, as a zoologist, has drawn his evidence chiefly from the animal world and, as a sociologist, from the manners and customs of savage races. Had he also been a botanist he would have been able to find in the plant kingdom also notable support for his conception of the important *rôle* which mutual help plays in nature. Here, for example, in certain cases, the collaboration between different species of plants has become so intimate and loyal that a lifelong alliance has been established—a plant partnership, as man prosaically designates this beautiful comradeship between the plants.

In late autumn, when the bare trees have been muffled for long dark weeks in a damp mist, what a lovely spectacle it is when the sun again bursts forth through the November fogs and casts a ribbon of pale gold between the branches of the elms and maples. The heavy drapery of leaves which weighed down and concealed them has been cast off and the tree's own form lifts itself up toward space, spiritual and pure in line as never before, while the trunk and the stouter branches gleam in the clearest green velvet. It is as though the summer's verdure had been refined, spiritualized, and had now wrapped itself as a shining green veil about the shapely trunk of the tree, a last farewell glance from life before the coming of the snow and winter's death.

This shining greenery, which, in the autumn, covers the tree stems, consists of a little plant so simply constructed as to consist of simple cells which, like bacteria, propagate by fission. Without some protective skin fabric these fragile beings would be exposed to the danger of drying up, and they can therefore only support life upon tree stems and stones when the air is very moist and the tree stems drip with water, as is the case in autumn and early spring. But some of these small green plants or algæ, as they are called, have concluded an alliance with other plants and, thanks to this coalition, are able to endure drought and to inhabit places which would otherwise be impossible to them. They have united themselves with certain fungi whose substance, consisting of fibriform cell rows, constructs first a close-woven, felted skin-tissue around the fragile algæ cells, then a root-like organ of attachment and suction which provides the green algæ cells with water and crude nourishment from the soil. In grateful exchange for these benefits the alga supplies nutriment to the fungus in the form of sugar which it prepares from the carbonic acid of the air; the latter being unable, for want of the green plants' colouring matter, chlorophyll, to transform the air's carbonic acid into a digestible (combustible) substance. The common lichens which form a grey-

green covering on stones and tree stems are composed of similar alliances between algæ and fungi.

We have a perhaps still more remarkable instance of mutual help in the plant world in the alliance which occurs between plants belonging to the papilionaceæ (pea family) and certain bacteria. In travelling across the sandy heaths of Brandenburg one is often astonished to see, in the midst of the sandy plain, scattered fields of yellow and blue lupins whose luxuriant growth contrasts strangely with the arid surroundings and, if at all inquisitive by nature, one wonders what can be the hidden power which, in the midst of the sandy desert, bestows upon the lupin life's golden verdure. Two thousand years ago the ancient Roman, Pliny, marvelled at this mystery, but the answer was first given about twenty years since when the German, Hellriegel, discovered that the lupin, as well as the rest of the pea family, lives in partnership with a bacterium which obtains for it from the air the nitrogen which it fails to find in the poor sandy soil. The importance of this for the plant becomes plain when one remembers that the albumen, which forms the bulk of the living substance (protoplasm) in the plant, consists partly of carbon which the plant obtains from the air's carbonic acid, partly of hydrogen and of oxygen which are absorbed in the form of water and oxygen from the air, and finally partly of nitrogen and sulphur which the green plants in general must absorb in free form (as potassium nitrate and sulphates) from the soil. The percentage of sulphur in the albumen amounts only to something over 1 per cent, and can therefore be obtained without difficulty from a quite poor soil; the proportion of nitrogen, on the other hand, works out differently; its percentage in the albumen is as much as 16 per cent, and it must consequently be present in considerable quantities if nitrogen deficiency is to be avoided. Now the air supplies up to four-fifths of free nitrogen, but this is entirely indigestible by the green plants which can only utilize such nitrogen as is already chemically combined with oxygen. What the green plants are not able to accomplish can, however, easily be done by certain bacteria which live in the ground and which penetrate the roots of the lupin, in which they cause peculiar tumours resembling pea-sized potatoes. In these tuberous excrescences live the bacteria, and into these they take up the nitrogen of the air which they supply, transformed into albuminous compounds, to the lupin, and this in its turn provides them with the sugar which, aided by the light, it has formed within the green leaf-cells. It has been estimated that a hectare of lupins can in this manner manufacture annually 200 kilograms of the air's nitrogen, and it is not therefore surprising that the attempt has been made to replace with cultures of these bacteria (S.K. nitragin) the relatively costly method of nitrogen manuring by means of potassium nitrate. That this attempt is not as yet crowned with any very great success in practice may be due in the first place

to the fact that, as the latest researches have revealed, each of the various pea plants (lupin, pea, clover, etc.) requires its peculiar bacterium if any co-operation is to be brought about, a circumstance which is naturally of the greatest importance in the application of artificial nitragin culture.

In later times it has been discovered that other bacteria, having a similar capacity of absorbing the nitrogen of the air are also found in the soil, all of which contains a greater or less quantity of air, for example the Clostridium closely studied by the Russian, Winogradsky, which has been named after the celebrated Pasteur, *Clostridium Pasteurianum*. This strange bacterium differs also in another respect from the other growths, the great majority of which, whether green or not, are like the animals in being unable to breathe without oxygen and soon die out if they are confined in air which is devoid of it. Now not only does the Clostridium possess the capacity of living without oxygen, but oxygen is for this strange organism a deadly poison, very much as chlorine or sulphurous acid are for us. In natural conditions therefore the Clostridium can only exist where other oxygen-consuming organisms are found in its immediate vicinity, and in arable lands, where the Clostridium lives, it is commonly found associated with two species of bacteria which breathe normally and which, by absorbing in their own interest such oxygen as is present in the ground, protect the Clostridium from its harmful effect. Whether we are here concerned with a case of genuine mutual help is perhaps doubtful; on the whole it is most nearly comparable with the thriving of the light-shunning copse plants under the light-absorbing leaf canopy of the beeches.

In very recent times it has been found that a number of fungi, among others the common green mould, also possess the faculty of absorbing and manufacturing the air's store of nitrogen which is inaccessible for other organisms. And, even more remarkably, it has been shown that a number of these nitrogen-absorbing fungi have entered into an association, a partnership, with green flowering plants on very much the same conditions, so far as we can judge, as those which form the basis of union between the nitrogen-absorbing bacteria and the pea plants. This discovery has been communicated to the leading German botanical journal by a lady of scientific attainments, Charlotte Ternetz, as the result of researches pursued by her for seven years.

The poorest tracts in our latitudes and those least favourable to an abundant vegetation consist, not only of sandy plains but also heaths and peat bogs. Here too it is the lack of nitrogen which principally makes itself felt. But one finds, nevertheless, in these regions of meagre vegetation, not only the common ling and whortleberry but also, especially in low lying tracts, the beautiful bell heather, bog whortleberry, and, in still damper places and in the peat bogs, the

cranberry and andromeda, all belonging to the great family of the Heaths. It has now long been known that in the epidermis cells in the roots of these plants there are constantly found alien lodgers or, to be exact, small fungi which, in the form of glomerate entwined threads, lie in layers in the epidermis. Charlotte Ternetz has now succeeded in recultivating these fungi and has, moreover, discovered that they, like the bacteria of the pea plants, possess the faculty of absorbing and manufacturing the nitrogen of the air. And in this connexion it has also been observed that the ling, bell heather, whortleberry, cranberry, and andromeda are associated each with its own fungus, precisely as the lupin, the clover, etc., live in company each with its own species of bacterium. But the fungi which infest the heath plants differ from the nitrogen-secreting bacteria in that, for the production of nitrogen, they work far more economically than the majority of nitrogen-secreting bacteria; thus, for example, Clostridium Pasteurianum consumes about one gramme of sugar in order to be able to produce one milligramme of nitrogen from the air while, on the other hand, one gramme of sugar enables the fungi of the heaths to produce from eighteen to twenty-two milligrammes of nitrogen. Although the conditions have not been, so carefully investigated in other respects as those of the pea family, it can hardly be doubted that, among the heath plants also, we have a very similar alliance in which the fungus gives to the green plant the nitrogen which it cannot obtain from the poor soil, and procures from the green plant in return the sugar which it needs for its organic growth and activity.

The old rhyme,

> I am alone as the heath's ling,
> Blossom early and wither young,

has therefore received a fresh contradiction: the ling blossoms late, withers never, and is never alone, but has, on the contrary, during its whole life a faithful companion in the fungus *phoma radicis ericæ*. And on the same grounds the bell heather, whortleberry, cranberry, and andromeda must now be classified among those creatures who have risen to the plane where mutual help is able to overcome the difficulties of life.

And yet it would perhaps be wise not to lay too great stress on the impulses toward a higher morality which here and there reveal themselves in nature. For out there in the peat bogs, side by side with the bell heather and andromeda, grow yet other plants which overcome the poverty of the peat soil in quite another manner; not through mutual help but by craft and violence. There are the carnivorous plants pinguicula, utricularia, and drosera, which with their cunning traps and prehensile filaments imprison all kinds of tiny creatures which

they then suck dry, acquiring by this means the nitrogen which they are not able to procure from the meagre soil of the peat bogs.

Thus, in the ever incalculable world of nature, the pioneers of altruism grow side by side with the sons of crime. A poet or a child would almost be inclined to believe that plants possess a soul which is reflected in the whole of their form and physiognomy. How innocently lovely is the cranberry with its green runners among the bog moss and its pink tinged, childishly bewitching blossoms; how beautiful and dream-like the blushing of the andromeda's bells; and does not the verdure of all these heath plants, fresh beneath the snow, serve as an image of the faithfulness of simple hearts? But lovely too is the pinguicula when from its succulent golden green rosette of leaves it lifts the dark blue of its flower yearning up into the daylight; lovely is the utricularia when its bright calices, like sulphur-yellow torches are reflected in the dark waters of the peat bog, and loveliest of all is the drosera when its blood-red foliage glistens and glows with the sparkling dewdrops of its thousand filaments. To me they seem fairer than all the rest, these criminals of the plant world, these radiant manifestations of the loveliness of evil.

* * *

FREDRIK BÖÖK

Martin Fredrik Christofferson Böök was born at Kristianstad in 1883. He was for some time Professor of the History of Literature at Lund, and, since 1921, has been literary critic of *Svenska Dagbladet*. Among his published works are essays in criticism and contributions to literary history as well as several volumes of travel-sketches.

The present essay has, by the author's permission, been translated expressly for this volume by Elizabeth Sprigge.

THE WISDOM OF AGE

AN OLD French tradition requires that a great author, after his death, should be described by the young man who has been his private secretary. The result usually is an intimate portrait which, according to the circumstances, is inspired by admiration or marked by a certain ironical criticism. Nor has Anatole France escaped his destiny. He seems indeed already to have foreseen this during his lifetime. When he observed M. Brousson making his notes he did not take it altogether amiss. He made only one condition, that these notes should not be published while he lived, because he wished to

avoid any unpleasantness with those of his contemporaries about whom he had happened to express himself with some freedom.

M. Brousson has had an indisputable success with his book on Anatole France.[1] It seems to have had a sale of nearly 100,000 copies; and one cannot say that this success is undeserved. The picture which he gives of Anatole France as an old man is clear, graphic, and convincing. It takes rank as an authentic document. It is an unusually live old man that his searching fingers have drawn; some will perhaps add that is an unusually ugly old man.

In externals the old man is a Parisian vulgarian. It is not easy to find a more unchanging type. There is something indescribably dusty and stuffy about the whole of his surroundings. M. Brousson shows us the master lying in bed, swathed in an endless mass of shawls and shreds of cloth, rather like Molière's *malade imaginaire* or the old grandmother in the story of Red Riding Hood and the Wolf. In his famous Villa Saïd there is a bathroom, thanks to the original architect, but one need hardly say that it is unfit for use. The bath is used as a receptacle for books as they arrive and, when it is full, Anatole France calls in a secondhand bookseller who pays fifty francs for the privilege of emptying it. Such are the old bibliophile's hygienic habits. . . .

He cannot live without nightcaps and skullcaps, and owns a vast collection of such articles. One of his women friends points out with gentle irony that he inherits this habit from the old bookseller his father. Anatole France is nothing but a new edition of the secondhand bookseller and antique dealer, and Villa Saïd, with all its books, holy relics, bibelots, and *bric-à-brac,* is only an enlarged shop where the owner toddles round among his possessions in slippers down at heel and with a skullcap on his head.

He is stingy and suspicious, expecting to be robbed at any moment, and only one passion, the collector's mania, can induce him to open his purse strings. His greatest delight is to haggle and bargain in antique shops, and in these he is even capable of extravagance. He has a fabulous memory for objects of art of all kinds, and from all the places he has visited he preserves vivid memory-pictures of museums, paintings, and historical oddments, though his remaining interests are strictly limited. Once when speaking of the socialist commonwealth of the future, of the ideal community of dreams, he declared with great precision that he could not bear to live in it. *Civitas dei,* the perfect kingdom of God, would bore him to death because in it there would be "*ni antiquaires, ni bouquinistes, ni marchands d'estampes.*" And he continued: "The ideal, my young friend, that remains for me is the little Parisian shop on the left bank of the Seine. There one goes and bargains in the twilight after the day's work.

[1] Jean Jacques Brousson: *Anatole France en pantoufles.* Paris, 1924, Les éditions G. Crès et Cie.

One spends a few louis. One always picks up something. The dealer knows his business; his conversation is full of interest and information. And his little wife is often obliging. Sometimes one can contrive to have her included in his collection. She comes, one fine morning, and delivers some trifle . . ."

In this little effusion one has Anatole France's quite sincerest and most personal vision of the ideal commonwealth. All the rest is for the gallery.

This is the not very imposing exterior. Should one inquire about the interior, about Anatole France's opinions, feelings, and ideas as they are reflected in his everyday life, M. Brousson supplies an answer which rests in complete harmony with the outer environment.

Anatole France seems to have conversed a little about everything, about grammatical questions, about Jeanne d'Arc and Napoleon and about ancient art. Regarding Chateaubriand and René he seems to have expressed himself on two separate occasions in precisely the same terms, unless M. Brousson has referred to the same conversation twice over. But there is one constantly recurring topic which sets its stamp upon Villa Saïd and the old antique dealer in slippers, a subject which is harped upon with astonishing persistence. Need I say it is erotic?

"They extol my learning," cries the greybeard in the skullcap, "but I no longer care to be learned except in the matter of love. Life is short and much reading unnecessary.[1] Love is now my sole and particular study. It is to this that I devote the remains of my failing ardour. What a pity that I cannot write all that the little god suggests to me. A melancholy prudery reigns over literature, a prudery sillier, crueller, and more criminal than the holy inquisition."

It is queer to think of Anatole France suffering such horrible pangs on account of the puritanical modesty which infects the literature of his time. But his verbal utterances to M. Brousson confirm beyond the shadow of a doubt that he never found the courage to give literary expression to his inmost convictions. Like Mephistopheles he has been unable publicly to teach the very best that he knew. He appears, where women are concerned, to be completely indifferent as regards age, beauty, and social standing. "I am of the same opinion as the most voluptuous of our kings, Louis XV, who would say to his valet Lebel: 'It is of no consequence who it is, but take her first to a bath and a dentist.' This monarch was a great man. Whatever may be said of him, he deserved the title *Le Bien-Aimé*."

The old man relates his exploits with astonishing frankness; they are all of the simplest kind, purely physical experiences, cash transactions. He makes his conquests in the streets and is frequently arrested

[1] The sentence "Life is short and much reading unnecessary" appears to be an interpolation of the Swedish critic as it does not occur in this passage in the French original.—*Translator's note.*

in the Bois de Boulogne where the police call him *"espèce de satyre"* but release him when he produces his card. He is visited by an old procuress who shows him photographs of her clients, and he introduces this serviceable dame as *"Une grande amie, une personne fort judicieuse, aimable, expédiente."* No shadow of uncertainty attaches to Anatole France's gospel; when he speaks of love one knows exactly what he means. At the age of sixty he gives good advice to his young friend: *"Voyez vous, mon ami, faites l'amour maintenant. Faites-le la nuit, le jour, en hiver, en été . . . C'est pour cela que vous êtes au monde. Tout le reste n'est que vanité, fumées, abusions! Il n'y a qu'une science: l'amour! Il n'y a qu'une politique: l'amour!"*

It is with an absolute frenzy that he rings the changes on this subject. He is full of mild indulgence for various forms of unnatural vice—he describes them humorously as orthographical errors—clearly because they have a certain connexion with the ruling passion of his life. On the other hand he cherishes a deep hatred for chastity, "the cruellest of all divinities." And he directs the same instinctive hatred against sickness and suffering. "I do not love the sick; suffering repels me." To attend a deathbed, to visit an invalid, that for Anatole France is a symptom of sadism, of boredom, of hypocrisy. He has such a horror of suffering that a pale woman, however beautiful, leaves him cold. One marvels that there should be anything that could check his voracity. To his secretary he admits without circumlocution that much of the sympathy he feels for him is due to his good health. One fine morning M. Brousson has a fainting fit, and Anatole France warns him not to let it happen again; that would cool the master's feelings for his charming secretary. Somewhat painfully affected, M. Brousson asks what would happen if he had a stroke, and Anatole France immediately replies: "Don't count upon me! I should show my compassion by sparing you my visits."

In the country of Erewhon, described by Samuel Butler, ill health is a punishable offense, but no one is held responsible for moral lapses, and people are sent to the doctor when they have committed a crime. Anatole France would have found himself at home as a citizen of Erewhon.

Christianity is, of course, of all things the most repugnant to a man holding such a theory of life. He neglects no opportunity of giving utterance to his aversion; he boasts of having insulted priests and is venomously derisive of bishops. Looking at a view of the Colosseum he bursts out in a lament that they had not thrown enough Christians to the wild beasts. "The Christians, madame, the Christians! I don't know how many churches, chapels, and cardinals' palaces have been built with stones reft from the unfortunate circus. If they had thrown all this Jewish rabble to the lions the monument would have escaped damage. Our souls too would have escaped damage. Our childhood

would not have been desolated by the silly stories of the sorriest of gods."

When Anatole France had received from Huysmans a verbal greeting intended to recall the Christian memories of childhood, he sent by his secretary the following friendly answer to the pious convert: *"France vous conseille de faire analyser vos urines."* In reality France regarded the Christian conception of life as a disease, and not Christianity only but every conception having a religious, a metaphysical, or even an ideal tendency was in his eyes ridiculous and detestable, a symptom of ill health. He declared that he himself sometimes suffered from metaphysical afflictions, but merely in consequence of having overeaten. Codfish, certainly, which his stomach could not endure, had a great power of turning his thoughts toward God. But a little Vichy water, a few drops of essence of peppermint, restored him promptly to reason, and he protested that Pascal's pious vertigo would have been cured by a spoonful of medicine. "O physic, preserve me from metaphysic," was a saying which he often quoted, but which he interpreted in his own somewhat bald fashion. He had a poor opinion of every attempt to ascribe a moral or spiritual purport to the affairs of life and he therefore deprecated the taking of death solemnly. In opposition to La Bruyère, who said that it is a serious thing to die, he maintained that it is quite easy, as easy as being born —it happens to all mankind. *"On sort de l'utérus pour aller pourrir en terre."* Such was the summing up of Anatole France's philosophy; all the rest was illusion.

In recording the intimate confidences of Anatole France, M. Brousson has done posterity a service. One cannot, of course, assert that this book contains the whole truth about him, but one can safely maintain that any interpretation of Anatole France which excludes these facts, which is inconsistent with this portrait, must be embellished and idealized. The interest of psychological truth demands that none of the facts shall be suppressed.

M. Brousson's book is written with admiration and sympathy for the master and without a trace of indignation. On the other hand it is full of irony and malice in small ways and naturally indicates a degree of disrespect and a tactlessness which it would be flattery to call cynicism—true cynicism can be an incomparably nobler thing. Yet it would be unjust to find fault with M. Brousson or to hold him to account for the manner in which he has handled his master's memory. There is an old proverb which exactly applies here: *"tel maître, tel valet."* How was the young man to learn reverence for spiritual values, for the divine in mankind? Anatole France once congratulated his secretary upon being unprejudiced, a freethinker (*libéré*). What this lack of prejudice involves the servant has now made manifest on the dead lord. They are quits.

While listening to the more or less witty conversation of Anatole France with M. Brousson two different pictures have risen in my mind. In the one instance there is the association of similarity, in the other, association through contrast.

Many years ago, every Sunday morning, I used to meet in a *café* certain Parisian small tradesmen, the most prominent of whom was a skilled goldsmith. I had been admitted to the company in spite of my extreme youth, on the ground of my readiness to play *la manille* during the time of high mass, my protestant freedom from prejudice carrying me thus far. It was a very simple card game, at least for one who during his student years had been through a thorough education in *vira*. For my partners the special charm of it lay in the fact that one played cards during the hour of divine service, in the shadow of Notre Dame; they, being all freethinkers, thus gave expression to their anti-clericalism. For me the pleasure lay chiefly in studying the types. Their conversation revolved with surprising invariability about two subjects: one of them *petites femmes* and *bonnes fortunes* and the other the perniciousness of religion, the absurdity of priests, and the repulsiveness of *la bondieuserie*. In some strange manner these two thought-cycles intersected; they melted into a single emotion while the cards danced and the bells of Notre Dame pealed; and I gathered that the priests and Christianity had incurred the profound dislike of these Voltairean tradesmen chiefly on the ground that religion hindered them in their simple pleasures. It was exactly the same mentality as that which reappears in Anatole France's familiar conversation with M. Brousson. He has been true to the tradition of the shops on the left bank of the Seine—he is, if one cuts out the literary fine phrases, nothing but the vulgar Parisian freethinker and girl-chaser. His horizon is the same.

The other memory picture is derived not from life but from literature. While I meditated upon M. Brousson's portrait of the septuagenarian master, certain rhythms began to ring in my ears and another image stepped forth.

The old man seems a king to me
Now that his life's long course is run,
The goal of his far journey won,
So enviable in victory.

Time to all storms has brought surcease.
Each neighbour gladly owns his sway;
Rash error, passion's wild display,
Disturb no more his kingdom's peace.

His subjects are controlled desires,
A peaceful flock that gently sleep
Of pleasant memories which keep
The warmth of long departed fires.

His royal splendour is his air
Of calm, his castle is the grave,
His sceptre is a pilgrim's stave
And he is crowned with silver hair.

This is Runeberg's noble poem *Den Gamle.* Thus the wisdom of age revealed itself a hundred years ago, but time has gone forward.

Nor am I alone in having lately been reminded of Runeberg's poem. Another Swedish critic, Dr. John Landquist, quoted it at the same time in an admirable review which he devoted to Georg Brandes' two last books [1] (in *Aftonbladet,* Feb. 16). The coincidence of this association of ideas was no accident, for Georg Brandes and Anatole France are contemporaries and mentally akin.

This author of eighty-three has lately published a little book entitled *Uimodstaaelige.* From beginning to end it deals with the famous seducers of women of the eighteenth century and, in essentials, is nothing but a string of pious embroideries on the memoirs of the Duc de Lauzun. I must admit that I too read Lauzun's memoirs some years ago—the rather worn copy had, by the way, belonged to the library of Karl XV at Bäckaskog, a fact which seemed to me very appropriate—but I must confess that I never dreamed a self-respecting author could choose them as the text for his commentaries. Yet this is what Georg Brandes has done, and with a greedy relish utterly distasteful to the reader. He has, for example, given himself the trouble nicely to calculate the number of the irresistible duke's amorous adventures. The figure he arrives at is 39, and Georg Brandes appends, with reasons for it, the following observation which must be given in the original Danish and unabridged: *"Gennemgaar man nu Listen opmaerksomt, vil man se, at den alt i alt ikke omspaender mer end 39 Navne, et Tal, som mangen en Mand, der aldrig har vaeret betragtet som uimodstaaelig og som heller ikke er gaaet på Jagt efter Kvinder, langt har overskredet. Kun maa det maerkes at da Lauzun slutter sin Fortegnelse, er han kun 36 Aar. En Mand som Richelieu, der endnu 92 Aar gammel bevarede sin Blaendkraft overfor det smukke Køn, har naturligtvis, ifald han havde villet, kunnet fremlaegge en saare meget laengere Leporelloliste."*

It can hardly be regarded as an indelicacy to point out that Brandes has in his mind a quite definite person who, without wholly devoting himself to the business, exceeds Lauzun's count of 39. . . . It is with calculations and bragging comparisons of this kind that Georg Brandes occupies himself in the autumn of his age. So enchanted is he with the subject, so ravenous is his zeal, that he forgets all else—taste, discretion, and decency. He is uncritical and credulous as a child listen-

[1] Georg Brandes: *Uimodstaaelige.* Attende Aalhundrede. Frankrig. Kjøbenhavn 1924, Gyldendalske Boghandel.—*Sagnet om Jesus.* Kjøbenhavn 1925, Gyldendalske Boghandel.

ing to fairy tales. Without blinking he repeats the well worn anecdote about Armand de Richelieu. *"Da han døde, 92 Aar gammel, fandt man paa Bordet ved hans Seng fem Brève, paa hvilke Seglet ikke var brudt i hvilke fem fornemme Damer paa en og samme Dag havde bonfaldt han om at shaenke dem en Time av hans Nat."* Had there been a vestige of critical sense in Georg Brandes he would surely at least have perceived that this is a cock-and-bull story; indeed all France is full of legends of the exploits of this renowned Don Juan.[1]

But just as Georg Brandes devoutly and uncritically accepts the edifying legends which are related of Richelieu and Lauzun so, on the other hand, all his scientific zeal for the truth and all his incredulity are aroused by the evangelists' accounts of Jesus. He has at last eased his heart by writing a little book, *Sagnet om Jesus,* in which, in the space of 100 pages, he demonstrates incontrovertibly that Jesus has never existed. It is superfluous to argue the point; for the present it is enough to say that there is not in all the world a single historian or philologist willing to accept Georg Brandes' researches and conclusions. They are hopelessly out of date. What provides the incentive for Brandes' latest work and has always been among his most powerful motives is a single-minded passion for the emancipation of the flesh and a not less single-minded hatred for the Christian religion. In the past he has disguised and adorned his main purpose in a very ingenious and engaging fashion, has called in as allies the freedom of thought and the independence of criticism; but in these candid creations of his ingenuous old age one encounters his deepest passion naked, and he proclaims it now in defiance of both reason and knowledge. It is by no means an attractive spectacle; and only his most devoted admirers and most confirmed partisans can fail to perceive that the celebrated critic must, in his turn, be subjected to criticism. His latest books have opened the eyes of many, and that is their greatest service. What the excellent American writer on æsthetics, Stuart P. Sherman, once wrote of Anatole France applies equally to Georg Brandes: "He is one of the innumerable champions of intellectual emancipation who have compromised the cause of liberty by their libertinism. He will pay his penalty in the inevitable reaction."

One feels positively embarrassed to have touched so much filth as is displayed in the works under review. But what is one to do when the literary celebrities of the day open their hearts and exhibit such contents? Is one, in mere decency, to look the other way and continue to burn incense before the idols? The true critic has no right to do so; he cannot imitate Shem and Japhet of whom it is related in the book of Genesis that they went backward into Noah's tent to cast

[1] This Duke Richelieu, born 1696 and died 1788, was great grandnephew of the famous cardinal; it is to be noted that one reviewer of Brandes' book has confused the two.

a mantle over the old man's shame. In exposing themselves thus shamelessly these grey-haired old men call attention to the deep defects in the achievement of their manhood. With a conception of life it is as with a building—if it cannot grow old with beauty and with dignity, if it moulders and falls into decay instead of acquiring patina, this is due to a defect in its foundations.

(1925.)

NORWAY

Introductory Note

AS WE have already seen Norway disputes with Denmark the credit for Holberg. However this may be decided, the following selection will show that she does not lack names indisputably Norwegian to represent her in the field of the essay. In recent years her literary history has been mainly a record of the swing of the pendulum between romanticism and realism. Finally a spirit of dissatisfaction with both extremes has given rise to a symbolism which endeavours to interpret what it sees and to pierce beneath the veil of the apparent into the hidden meaning and essence of things. The plays of Ibsen exemplify all these changes. So also does the work of Björnson.

* * *

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON (1832-1910) was a poet, a novelist, a dramatist, a great public speaker, and a prolific writer of articles and essays. He shared with Henrik Ibsen the leadership in that wonderfully productive movement in the literary and artistic life of Norway in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Partly directly, through his activities as a speaker and publicist, and partly indirectly, through the strong national sentiment which runs through all his written work, Björnson was largely instrumental in developing that national culture which led, among other things, to the definite political independence of Norway in 1905.

The following essay is taken from *Artikler og Taler*, Bind II, by permission of Mrs. Björnson, and has been specially translated for this collection by Ellen Lehmkuhl.

THE AIM OF POETRY

SINCE the early days of my youth I have had in my mind a very primitive picture of human evolution: I see it as an endless procession in motion. Advancing—not exactly in a straight line—yet always advancing. Irresistible craving is urging it on, at first instinctively but gradually with an increasing consciousness. Not yet so conscious, however, that it has been possible for any man to develop his wish for progress into pure consciousness.

In this mixing of the conscious and the unconscious our imagination is at work. In some so strongly that it forces the thought. Forces it ahead where new roads are discovered and the procession regulated.

The experience of benefit or harm has from the very first dominated our consciousness—and to this day nothing is more fundamentally rooted there. It is in fact so deeply rooted that it can never be ignored without giving us a feeling of discomfort.

How strange to me, therefore, is the doctrine that men and women of letters should free themselves from the consciousness of good and evil before they set out to work. The thought-power then acts as a camera in perfect unconcern of the harmful or the beneficial, the pleasing or the displeasing.

I am not trying to find out how far any person of a sound mind would be able to rid himself of this which, through millions of centuries of inherited consciousness, has so far ruled the generations. I merely ask: How is it that they who believe that they follow it give us just *this* picture and not *that?* Does it always happen quite mechanically? Why are the symbols they use almost always offensive? Did it happen with no choice whatsoever?

I don't think we need answer that. They, no more than the rest of us, are able to free their ideas of the inherited moral valuations; the only difference is that *we* serve while *they* revolt.

I must add that not everything which might seem so is of necessity a revolt. Much of the leadership of to-day has once been considered rebellions. I only want to prove that many who deny that poetry should have a tendency, show that tendency in their own works. And I will add that the farther we climb the ladder of intellectual freedom, the stronger the tendency. The great poets of Greece arranged the community of gods and men. Shakespeare's poetry is an enormous Germanic Valhalla, sometimes brilliant, at other times enveloped in clouds of storm. In this Valhalla all life rose to fight again, but always dominated by Shakespeare's sense of justice, his intense and deep belief in the everlasting abundance of life. The figures of Molière and Holberg, with their wigs and white-frilled headgear, are called forth from their graves as often as it pleases us, to run with dainty and grotesque movements the errands of their creators. They are as full of tendency as of words.

I mentioned just now our Germanic Valhalla. Can it not be said that Goethe and Schiller have carried parts of the Elysium into our Germanic Valhalla? The sky became clearer and warmer, life and art grew brighter, more beautiful. Can it not be said that they who lived by the genius of the young Tegner, the young Oehlenschlager, and the young Wergeland—not to forget Byron and Shelley—have something of the Greek gods about them?

That time and its tendency have passed. But when we mention

our own time, the first to be remembered here is my old, departed friend and compatriot.[1] He has lighted many lighthouses along our coast, which are the first to be seen by all who seek harbour. They throw their light world-wide to give warning of dangers.

Next I will mention the old Russian master.[2] He stands in the open harbour of human happiness waving his hands.

The souls of both these men and their long working-day have had an ever growing tendency, growing as a torchlight in the breeze of night.

I have not said anything about tendency in connexion with Art. Tendency more than anything else can give Art a radiant heat, but, on the other hand, it can quite overpower it. *Ich rieche die absicht und werde verstimmt.* Neither have I said that as long as tendency and Art go hand in hand all is well.

As for the two great masters I have just mentioned, it happens that the warnings of the first are so sharp that they frighten us, while the other presents to us idols too unreal for human character, and they frighten us too. But we must have our courage strengthened, not weakened.

We must not be frightened away from the roads which are opened to us. We must obtain a sure belief in life's eternal and beneficent abundance. We must get the conviction that when the first fear is calmed, the darkest dissipation overcome, our earth is again refreshed by pure water from the everlasting source. Our faith itself has its offspring there.

This is why in modern poetry Victor Hugo is my choice. Within his glorious imagination this belief in life's abundance is the chief element. There are many who criticize Victor Hugo, especially because of his theatrical manners. Personally I think that his shortcomings are all blown to the winds by his enormous and powerful vitality.

Our instinct of preservation demands abundance. If life had no abundance it would stop. Every picture which does not possess it is a false picture. It makes us feel uncomfortable.

There are, of course, weak souls and spoiled egoists, who cannot endure to hear a hard-handed truth! With us it is different.

If they who choose to express the terror of life or to make visible such words and such acts as are hidden away in shame could have given us at the same time the conviction that, whatsoever happens, life has its infinite abundance, then we would say to ourselves: "We are here presented with one of life's many riddles which in its very essence is explained by those words, and can only be relieved through that terror, by that very act." Yes, then we would have felt a sacred earnestness

[1] Henrik Ibsen.
[2] Tolstoy.

or an irresistible mirth according to the will of him that was leading us.

But as a rule they never arrive so far, and we feel a two-fold discomfort. First, because we miss the abundance of life and, secondly, because he who tried to lead us was not capable, and all incapacity is painful.

The more a man takes upon himself, the stronger he must be. There is no word which cannot be uttered, there is no deed or no terror which cannot be painted, if he be there who knows how to do it.

The continuity of life is the thing we look for in Art, in its tiniest little drop as well as in its storm-beaten ocean waves. We are delighted to find it there, we are troubled if it is missing.

The primeval experience of benefit and harm has spread through and guides all our conduct of life and research. It demands that Art shall multiply and intensify it in millions of examples. It is never satisfied.

This I have tried to obey. In reverence, with enthusiasm.

* * *

GUNNAR HEIBERG

Born in 1857, Gunnar Heiberg is the most prominent Norwegian dramatist and man of letters after Ibsen and Björnson. His dramatic works, which are highly esteemed and regularly played in Norwegian and German theatres, have been collected and published in four volumes. He has also achieved distinction on account of his essays and these have been published in five volumes.

The following essays are taken from *Set og Hört* by permission of the author, and have been specially translated for this collection by Ellen Lehmkuhl.

I. DAUMIER

THANKS to the last World Exhibition Daumier was discovered anew. Of course the name was remembered, and it was also frequently seen in the *Charivari* which reprinted his old caricatures. But Daumier the painter had been forgotten. He had been forgotten so completely that when, a year before his death in 1879, his friends—led by Daubigny and Corot—organized an exhibition of his works, nobody came, and they had to defray all the expenses. And yet, Baudelaire had given him his homage, Théodore de Banville had written poems in his honour, and Camille Pelletan had written a detailed and enthusiastic essay on him.

In the year 1900 France discovered that she possessed a man who was in the world of art what Molière and Balzac were in literature.

And a year later an exhibition was arranged which included everything he had done—paintings, sculptures, drawings, aquarelles—all his works which had been pawned or sold by his impoverished widow were now got together from famous private collections. This time it was not the colleagues of Daumier but the art-critic, Gustave Geoffroy, who organized the exhibition.

Daumier reached the age of 71 and found time during all these many years always to remain poor, never to be popular, to sit for six months in a political prison, as a republican to return the Legion of Honour to the Emperor Napoleon, in old age to become almost blind, never to be acknowledged as a painter, to live in the miserable light of tolerant smiles from his fellow creatures—for never had he done anything but amuse them—and then to die in debt, forgotten, not even hated—being only a caricaturist.

"This rogue has a good deal of Michelangelo in him," said Balzac.

Connoisseurs class him with Rembrandt, Goya, Delacroix. His "flaming impatience" more than anything reminds one of all these three. It was an impatience that did not allow him time for the details; he rushed on so that all he did still vibrated with his own soul. Those three great names always come back to us now every time that we hear or read about Daumier, but during his life nobody ever wrote about them or mentioned them—these stormy natures who as a noble old Frenchman says, surprise, hurt, and offend their own generation, who can never be sufficiently admired, and whose example is so dangerous for youth."

Daumier painted the skies and the rivers, the night and the day, houses and bridges, horses and dogs and donkeys; he loved glare and obscurity and passing shadows; he knew the attitudes and movements characteristic to us all—men, women, and children—as all good painters do.

But he had not the dread of psychology that so many good painters have. He saw the drama of eradication called human life. It interested him, and he told of the drama itself and how it affected the minds of the bystanders, their faces, their eyes.

He was not afraid to read the countenance of man—which most painters only do when the model is posing—and what he saw he painted, even if it was ridiculous.

He was afraid neither of psychology nor of ridicule, for he knew that it was part of the drama which he wanted to commit to the canvas for ever.

He understood human character and knew, felt, saw the perpetuity of our instincts, our passions, our virtues, and vices. It is correct to compare him with Molière and Balzac because—like them—he had a spontaneous, unerring instinct for all the occurrences of life. He could scale the heights of longing, he could measure the gulfs of delusion,

and knew exactly how to give the right effect. Moreover he, like them, was a poet.

He painted counsel at the bar, judges in court, and criminals between *gendarmes;* he painted wrestlers struggling, and actors on the stage.

But his greatest pleasure was to observe how others observed, how the drama was reflected, the passions it aroused, the qualities it inspired—all those secrets which life reveals in the face.

He painted the audience in the theatre during the performance and between the acts. And he gave us the pleasure of seeing both the confused chorus of echoing faces and the many lights; the deep shadow under the row of boxes, the semi-light, and the semi-obscurity.

As there are playgoers who do not care to see as long as they can hear the voices, the sound, the accentuation, that which comes from within with explosive force, so there are others who would not mind being deaf as long as they were able to see. To them the face is like a landscape under a clouded sky. They only care for the mimicry. It entertains them in the same way as it is amusing to see little children playing hide-and-seek for the first time.

Daumier's highest delight was to watch others see. And he has illustrated this refined pleasure as no one before or after him ever illustrated it. He has painted many pictures of this—one man standing contemplating drawings, three men standing together contemplating a picture, or three men sitting together scanning an etching—and we can feel that tranquil well-being, that unending sinking into peace which the delight of the eyes can accord us. Again, in another picture, we see how the nerves of a connoisseur vibrate with delight, and so is *he* moved by what he sees that he is out of breath and does not know where to begin and where to end. And not only do we behold the eyes or the faces of these people, but by their attitudes, by their movements, their backs, the bend of their heads, by their gentle caressing hands, by the way they lose the control of their limbs, are we shown the devotion that makes their eyes consume, drink, enjoy, thank, worship, and so we love that which they reflect.

One of his pictures represents a huge man, naked but for a belt round the waist—a wrestler. He faces us, half in darkness, in front of a large curtain, slightly lifted, and through this opening, in the full glare of the lights, is seen a lump of human flesh on four gigantic legs—it is two wrestlers fighting in an arena, and behind them hundreds of spectators, amphitheatrically seated in a glare of light which gradually dies. Here—where light and darkness meet in conflict, they all are—the actors, those who enjoy seeing the fight, and he who watches the fighters and waits for his turn. It is life in a vision before our eyes.

One of the many dead chapters of history which burdened my mind was the reign of Louis-Philippe. It lay there like an indigestible lump till the caricatures of Daumier brought life to it. This is, to be sure,

rather frequently the case. What we learned at school looks square and sleeping, until, by search or by chance, one comes across the literature or the letters or the illustrations from the epoch in question. And it strikes me more and more each time these things occur that the outward changes which happen are unessential, and that the infinite changelessness of man alone is lasting; that Louis-Philippe and Thiers and Guizot and 1848 are the details that disappear and get lost, but that Don Quixote and Sancho Panza are always the leading characters who never die, or when they die they rise again and go on cantering and galloping on Rosinante and the donkey. And it begins to dawn upon one that it might perhaps be good pedagogy to help one's children to see in time the real, earnest, and instructive personalities in life—as the Spanish knight and his corpulent page, as Falstaff and Hedspore, as Erasmus Montanus and Hjalmar Ekdal—whilst one should let them ignore Napoleon and leave out Bismarck and all the rest of the boasters, who only ripple the surface of the ocean of mankind, and who for the sake of their great noise should be consigned to caricature.

Daumier has painted Don Quixote setting out in mad career toward the windmill. He is blinded by courage, by self-sacrifice, by enthusiasm, but in the foreground, colossal as a pyramid against the sailing clouds, Sancho, raising himself in the stirrups, stretches his arms toward heaven in astonishment over all that his eyes must see, his intelligence suffer, and his earthliness endure of heavenwardness.

When, in the end, Daumier lay half-blind, half-known, half-forgotten, poverty-stricken, and without a hold on men, thinking of all the pleasure he had given them during his life, and all the money that unknown successors would be earning on his works after his death, I wonder if he did not then for the last time ask himself which had the greater value, the rapture of enthusiasm that filled the earnest knight, or the profound seriousness that possessed his merry friend and page.

II. MAN

"RUDE as a Frenchman" is sure to become a proverb one day. See them: they don't get out of your way on the pavement, they don't lower their umbrellas, they don't move to make room for you on a bus or in a *café*—there is hardly a woman in all the world who could do it.

The Frenchmen are only polite to pretty ladies, to eminent people, to personal acquaintances, and people by whom they can profit. The Italians, on the contrary, are polite, kind, comprehending immediately what in defective Italian you are trying to explain to them. If you ask a question of one man in the street and he does not know or is not certain, another man immediately comes up, asks what you want, and gives the information. We Norwegians are almost timidly polite;

the Swedes are demurely polite, as if they were just being introduced; the Danes are polite when you meet them singly, but if there are several of them they become boastful and Copenhagenish; the Germans have no manners at all in that respect, they are casual. I happened to be contemplating in this fashion when I was getting off the train in Siena. There was an English lady and gentleman in my compartment. We had not been talking. But when I was about to leave, I saw that the lady turned to the gentleman, and he said to me: "Don't trouble about your luggage, I will hand it to you through the window." It proves how ungrateful one sometimes is that the only thought which struck me, after I had thanked them nicely, was this: That must be a common Englishman since he is so polite.

The little kindness, however, did me good. It had been a dreary journey because of rain and indisposition. It was one of the crooked days—you are afraid to miss the trains, you suddenly fear to be on the wrong train, you dread the thought of new hotels and new and appalling prices. Very laboriously you are eking out your few foreign words to make a sentence. It was one of the days when you don't understand why you travel at all and when your only wish is to be back at home in your own bed, asleep. That day after all it only needed those two English folk to raise my spirits, and to light up my mind and make it bright and receptive and habitable for new impressions. All my windows were open and through them I stared with all my eyes, when I made my entry into Siena.

Florence is called "La Bella"; "La Superba" is the name for Genoa; her rival Venice is called "The Queen"; Rome, "The Eternal"; Milan, "La Grande"—they are all women with brilliant names, princesses, goddesses. Siena is a man. He is simply called Siena.

When you visit a town, spend a few days there, entangle yourself in it a bit, get in contact with it, and seem instinctively to feel the people that live there, you sometimes realize that you are continuously searching for something. It is as if you expect an answer, as if you listen for an echo. There is a calling from your soul, a questioning from your inner self. In other words you wish something which varies with the different towns you visit. Each special town has called forth exactly those wishes which it could satisfy the most. It is as hospitable as a refined lady, for you do not feel that she is the cause of your well-being. You don't know at all that you are desiring, you believe that you possess. The desires feel so well in the strange atmosphere, that you at least believe it to be merely a question of the time when they are to be fulfilled. And you could hardly expect more, or desire it better. You are having all the pleasure of the thing desired, except the fact. And sages and men less than sages, who between them make experiences, claim that it is best so.

Siena is not that type of town. It is not hospitable. It does not

give the feeling that you are in pleasant company. You do not go about there—wishing. You are simply filled—filled, overwhelmed, breathless almost.

It lies, tall, above the landscape, on three mountains that sink toward each other in the centre, and the centre is the market-place of the town. From the market-place upward in all directions, like furrows in the rocks, the streets of the town twist and twine, full of gloomy shadow, empty, lined by poor but massive houses and magnificent palaces. It is almost as desolate as a lunar landscape. Farther upward are narrow dark streets, without pavements, without trees, without children—never two yards of level, always upward or downward. And then at last, at the top, are precipices down on every side toward the distant land around, deep down, bluish white in the glittering sun.

Everything in this sombre town set in this fairy landscape is of a similar character, from the so threateningly unconquerable castle (the town hall) in the centre of the town, up through narrow gates and steep staircases to the Duomo with its forest of melancholy column-masses. Siena is steadfast, without mirth, absorbed in itself and regardless of the world around. It has no finery, no tinsel. It is a huge rock with furrows and groves and cracks, depending on itself only. Blaming nobody, it is to nobody indebted.

It does not seem to have any artistic feeling. It itself is Art, created by Michelangelo, one of the gods, just as the prophet Jeremias in the Sistine Chapel, or as the "Morning" in the sepulchre of the Medici.

Siena is a hard, sombre, cool, almost cold man, whom you begin by fearing, go on to admire, and end by loving. An independent character, true to himself in all and everything, he is not one of the greatest of men perhaps, but original. He has few qualities, but what he has are solid. He is a man, and that in all. And if he smiles, if there be sunshine in the deep furrows, you are doubly happy, because the smile has something of the abundance of power, the flash of strength from that strength which is so strong, so that we all become like children and feel like children.

If in the other towns on earth you feel that you might share with others some of all the treasures that surround you, you here sit down tranquilly, in solitude, saying to yourself as you meditate calmly: "Few men deserve to know Siena."

* * *

NILS KJÆR

Nils Kjær (1870-1925) is generally considered to be one of the most accomplished writers of modern Norwegian prose. He is undoubtedly the outstanding essayist in Norwegian literature. His output was not very great, but all that he wrote was distinguished. His

very witty dramas, in which tragedy and comedy are blended with subtle cunning, make thoroughly enjoyable reading but have never been popular on the stage. He achieved, however, one great stage-success in his political comedy, *The Happy Election*, which now belongs to the regular repertoire of the principal Norwegian theatres.

The following essay is taken from Kjær's *Collected Works*, Bind IV, by permission of Messrs. Gyldendal, and has been specially translated for the present collection by Mrs. H. K. Lehmkuhl.

THE ANTS

"GO TO the ant and be wise," says a proverb of Solomon, and to schoolboys this advice has been repeated at all times with varying success. I remember that the word was somewhat vague to me in my childhood, for I never realized that it meant the first, the best ant, otherwise I would have despised the hint, and I still feel inclined to do so.

The activity which these quarrelsome little animals display, never struck me as being worthy of imitation for the human race. They run about, yes, but what is the object of their running? If you take the proverb seriously and you "go to the ants," choosing one respectable-looking individual as a model and example, you will soon discover that the ant in question makes nothing but useless and contradictory movements. At first she speeds along in one direction. "There," you say to yourself, "there she has a task and runs on an errand of great importance to the public good." But, suddenly she stops in front of a pine-needle and scans it attentively, whereupon she either returns the way she came, or takes a new and different path. You do not lose faith in her, and you think with kindness that perhaps the pine-needle has tickled her fancy and reminded her that a totally different and, to society, more important pine-needle is lying at her disposal nearer the ant-hill. She crosses, however, on her way both pine-needles and other rubbish. Evidently the public good does not require any more pine-needles, and this theory concerning the motive of the little animal's advance must be withdrawn. With unaffected energy she continues her walk, sniffs at the passers-by of her own nation, takes incalculable detours and detours again from the detours, as if it were a matter of placing possible pursuers off the scent. Yet nothing but a human eye pursues her. Full of excitement you now await the moment when she shall reach her place of destination and go ahead with the job, whatsoever this may be. At last she arrives at the root of a young aspen-tree and starts, with great courage, to climb three or four yards on the smooth bark, then she resolutely clambers down again, and continues her stroll on the broken ground. Is it likely that the public can profit

by these movements? No, Solomon must excuse me, but, with the very best of intentions, I cannot see anything inspiring in a work which manifests itself in the manner described. Had I accompanied a politician on his electioneering my intellectual benefit could not have been less.

Now I don't blame an ant for taking exercise. I am myself a friend of idleness and I love to roam, but I don't give myself dignified airs, nor do I assume to be able to cry to all creation, "Come here to be wise." As far as my observations go the incessant wanderings of these small, over-estimated animals have no other purpose than recreation. And when people explain it differently, when they talk of duties and how important it is to inspect the matter, I do not hesitate to call it a swindle.

Earlier philosophers have studied the agriculture of the ants, and have written enthusiastically of their cattle-breeding. It is not my business to go into detail, but I have seen something of their cattle-keeping, and the milk does not tempt me. An ant climbs an old birch on which the population of the ant-hill keeps its out-farm enclosures, embraces the first and the best plant-louse she meets on any of the scurfy leaves, and, grasping the louse firmly, throws herself down from fantastic heights. If they survive, the ant will suck the juice of her domestic animal.

As far as I can see, neither labour nor attention is required for householding of that kind. And, last but not least, if you could see how the ants behave in extraordinary or unusual circumstances, how they crowd and make unnecessary confusion when the situation demands discipline and restraint, you would think with me that the general admiration for these animals is much too exaggerated. One of the most irritating of their characteristics, however, is their undeniable respectability. They fear the intoxicating flowers, they chew their rotten wood, and fight like plucky ants among themselves in snuff-brown, democratic abominableness.

So I had decided not to learn anything from the ants, this morning, when I sauntered along on my island's one and only road thinking of everything else. The road is a good one, straight and sandy. It was free from dust after newly-fallen rain, but it had two deep wheel-marks from the island's only vehicle, and I observed already some distance away that, somewhere halfway between the furrows, unusual things were going on. It looked like a tiny ball of black wool striving to roll across the road, but when I approached I saw that it was the dead body of a beetle which my friends, the ants, were trying to move. For once they really had a job—they were having one of their great working-days. The corpse of the beetle was heavy and massive, and it was almost impossible to get a proper grip of the hard and shining wings. Some of the ants, therefore, pulled and pulled at the nicely

folded legs of the corpse, as if they, in a temper, were demanding that the dead should get up and help with the transport. But the beetle was past caring about his own funeral. Some twenty ants were labouring hard, and they advanced but slowly and painfully. It astonished me, however, to see that they had very probably already crossed one of the wheel-tracks, the steep sides of which seemed almost unsurmountable for them with a load like that. I gave myself time to watch how they would manage the second. They would throw the body over the edge, of course, but how were they to lift it again from the bottom? I sat down on a roadside kerbstone, and waited patiently while I silently regretted several detrimental remarks I had previously made concerning their character.

At long last, the procession reached the edge of the wheel-track, but there round the corner came the island's horse and carriage. And neither horse nor carriage nor Lars meant evil.

The horse jogged along in the middle of the road, the man gave it a free rein and was filling his pipe, and the wheels rolled deeply and irresponsibly in their own tracks. "This," I said to myself, "is not yet the inevitable fate." The hard-working animals and their prey may be able to avoid the horseshoe as well as the wheels of the carriage, because they are still on the edge which will remain untouched and neutral. Let us only hope that the ants are not driven into disaster through their own eagerness. Here, their celebrated instinct ought to warn them. But the sun shines and the birds sing, and the ants, so happy in their work, toil, and no dark presentiment can check their energy. At last, triumphantly, they roll themselves and their precious corpse over the edge into the wheel-track. It was at the last moment. They came just in time to be crushed.

I am not drawing the moral of the catastrophe. I do not drag people to the ants to make them wiser. If the ant-hill, as we much hope, be a well-organized society, there will always exist wise and kind-hearted ants who are able to console the mourners by telling them that the friends who perished died doing their duty, and so they will animate others to take a lesson from the disaster.

The comical obliquity of the catastrophe, that in this case a little neglect of duty on the side of the energetic labourers would have saved them from the wheels, is, of course, not obvious to ant-eyes. And that a wheel for no instructive or punitive reason is allowed to roll across wee little lives and crush them, is a thought too involved for the benevolent ones in the hill. No, I am convinced that we have nothing to learn from the ants. And, from a human standard, I prefer this simple explanation: that the ants were killed because they happened to be in the wheel-track in one, for them, unfortunate moment—notwithstanding their life, notwithstanding their faults and their virtues,

and notwithstanding the beneficial lessons and other deliberate nonsense which might be suggested in connexion with their tragic end.

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JOHAN BOJER

JOHAN BOJER, born in 1872, is a very popular novelist and one of the most widely read of living Norwegian writers beyond the bounds of his own country. In his novels, of which *The Great Hunger* and *The Last Viking* are the most famous, he gives vivid and intimate pictures of Norwegian life. His novels have been translated into nearly all living languages.

The following essay, which is included by permission of the author, has been specially translated for this volume by Ellen Lehmkuhl.

NORWEGIAN FAIRY TALES

SCHOLARS divide the popular fairy tales into various categories: poetical, moral, humorous, and nature-mystic. Some fairy tales are a combination of all these. Many again, in journeying from one place to another, simply change into the national costumes of the different countries through which they pass. This is not the case with some fairy tales which I venture to call "landscape fairy tales." These are quite characteristic of the individual countries and remain, so to say, residential there. We in Norway have many of them at any rate.

There is a picture by Sinding showing a gloomy mountain-slope covered with dark forests. Out of this gloom we see a boy escaping in frantic haste—almost wild with fear. The picture is called: "It is so dark, so dark, far away in the wood." One can almost feel that the shadows, the whistling of the wind, the solitude, the roots of trees, and the sneaking stealth of animals have together taken the shape of some weird and supernatural being who is trying to clutch the boy. He comes dashing right out of the fairy tale.

Jonas Lie says that we all have a troll inside. We are made in accordance with some particular landscape and the spirit which is dormant there. We are, so to say, governed by our landscape. In town they call it being stamped by one's *milieu*. "But we who are from the country," says Lie, "we have mountains, woodlands, and oceans too, in the depths of our being, which inspire us more than we may perhaps realize."

He also tells us how he once met an elderly jurist whose head was like that of a seal, and that when the old man was angry his eyes become two jelly-fishes sparkling with phosphorescence. There evidently could be no doubt as to *his* origin.

Asbjörnsen has a story of the boy who met "the three Trolls" in the Hedalswood. They had only one eye between them. Hedalen lies between gigantic mountains and is an arm of the Gudbrandsdals-valley. In this fairy tale the shaggy, sombre mountain-side itself has legs and comes walking out to meet man. The one eye is a bonfire, lit in the dark by a solitary forester far away on the mountain slope.

The landscape fairy tale is our eldest saga and our most ancient mythology. The forests had their respiration, the mountains their eye, and the sea its emotion long before man had learnt to raise the first memorial stone or to dream of Eternity.

The same fairy tale is also our earliest geography. It reflects the scenery and the national character of the different parts of Norway. In the east and on the south coast the hill-lady is the principal person. And the hill-lady is the fair-foliaged down who opens her eyes and lives. She is the sweet ensoulment of the hills. In the west of Norway and in Nordland, where ocean and mountains have a grander pathos, the fairy world alters accordingly. Through the vast mountain regions the peaks with their everlasting snow become mighty gnomes whose callings to each other measure the distances of time and space.

Three mountain-veterans—their heads in heaven and many, many miles between them—sat and held their peace. Thus they had been sitting in silence through many hundred years.

But one fine day the first veteran looked up and said: "Methinks a cow was lowing."

Three hundred years later his neighbour miles farther away had found the answer. He shouted: "Yes!"

Still three hundred years elapse, then at last the third of the veterans had also a word to say in the matter. He shouted: "If there is so much talking here, I'll move."

Thus the fairy tale measures the distances of time and space, and between the lines it measures much of Norwegian temperament too.

It is evident that the fairy-tale world of Nordland is richer and more manifold than anywhere else in the country. The long and dark winters, the tempests, the ocean, the mighty chain of desolate mountains covered with snow, hung by mists, or gilded by the midnight sun, has inspired the imagination. One half of man's life was reality, the other half became fiction and by its means he gazed into the invisible.

Most of the rocks up there are fairy tales in stone. They are men on horseback, men on skis, men in boats, and women lying, sitting, standing. They were all on their way somewhere, to meet a lover or to perform some task, but the sun rose—and they burst and were all turned into rock and stone.

The "Noskenæss Current," between the mainland and the extreme Lofot Islands, became a kettle stirred by an angry crone. The mountain-chain "Seven Sisters" in Helgeland became white-robed virgins

who, combing their hair on sunny days, bend forward to see their image in the Westfjord.

One kind of fairy tale describes the love between man and the fairy-tale people.

In the East and South these fairy tales are rather tame. A boy falls in love with the hill-lady. He meets her in the wood and she lures him into the mountains, as Per Gynt, for instance. From the mountain there is no escape except on a Thursday night, when the bells of the parish church are ringing. But it happens that the boy persuades the hill-lady to accompany him to his home, and if he can manage to get her to church and to a Christian wedding-ceremony —well, then her tail disappears and from that time she becomes a most wonderful and matchless wife.

In Nordland, and through the fishing-districts in general, these fairy tales vary greatly.

A boy from Salten one day discovers some sealskins that lie on the sands by the sea and farther out in the bay some young girls are bathing. This is something for a boy to look at. He wraps himself in one of the sealskins and, creeping nearer and nearer from bush to bush, at last sits down to watch. The girls are very gay, they splash and shout and laugh out there in the water. After a time they return to the shore where they take a sealskin each and are immediately changed into seals, who jump into the water and disappear. Only one is left behind weeping bitterly, for the sealskin which the boy had stolen belonged to her.

The boy goes to her and tries to comfort her. They begin to talk and in the end she accompanies him to his home and marries him. She becomes a marvellous wife who bears him many sons and daughters.

But one day, when she is once more in childbed, her eldest son comes down from the cockloft with an old sealskin he has found there. And no sooner does the woman recognize the skin, than she leaps out of bed, snatches the skin, and is instantly changed into a seal, who jumps into the sea and disappears.

Our fishermen have a vivid imagination of rich fields and meadows far, far away in the ocean surrounded by the most desirable fishing-grounds in the world. Here every man is rich, and every woman is beautiful, and it can all be yours if you only go on sailing far enough to the west. This is the fairy tale of "Utröst," the poor fishermen's paradise on earth.

In my district, Tröndelagen, we have many fairy tales about poor fishermen who attain wealth and splendour through their marriage with the fairy-women from the sea. When I was a boy an old woman once told me of such a lucky fellow, and this, she said, was not a tale, but the bare truth, and she gave the name and the place. "It was that Ola from Besvolden." He used to be so poor and miserable, having nothing

but a tiny hut in the mountain. All the windows were broken, and the hut was full of children almost without clothes. "But one winter Ola is fishing in Halten with Elias, my brother," said the old woman, "and as they are sitting at the fishing-station one day, all of a sudden Ola disappears. Nobody had seen him go. At last they all get up and search for him. But, however much they look and call in the neighbourhood, Ola is not to be found. And in the spring they have to return home and bring the sad news that their comrade must have fallen from a rock into the sea and had probably been drowned."

If there used to be poverty in the little hut before it certainly was no better now, when he who had provided for them was gone. But next year the same fishermen are again sitting together at the fishing-station, and suddenly Ola is seen in their midst. They stare and stare and seem to stiffen. And Ola is now a man of importance, stout and smart with a golden chain across his chest, golden earrings too, and long and shining boots that reach above the knees. Yes, looking like a real tradesman. "I suppose you are a bit astonished to see me," says Ola, "but I am now a rich and wealthy farmer. I have money in plenty, a large house, many boats, and the finest children you can imagine, and I am married to the loveliest woman you ever saw."

"Married," says Elias. "Are you married? What about Malina, who is left in the poor hut alone with the children, misery, and starvation?"

"Don't speak about it," says Ola, "it was so terrible, I could not support it any longer. If the continual toil and poverty were not to make me quite mad I had to try something else. And if you fellows would like to become as rich as I am now, my wife has three fine sisters, who are as beautiful as they are wealthy. And if you would like to see them straight away, all you need to do is to take a mouthful of the contents of this bottle."

"No, I should think not," they reply, "you won't get one drop of that stuff into any of us. And if it is true, that you are such a fine fellow now, you had better go back to where you come from." And before they have time to say any more, Ola has disappeared again, just as when you blow out a candle, and they never saw him after that.

The Fro Islands, with the fishing-ground Halten, lie in the ocean west of the entrance to Trondhjemsfjord. I have there found a fairy tale corresponding with a folk song on the same subject.

The Fro Islands resemble an enormous flock of birds on the water. I am told that somebody once counted all these rocks and islets strewn over the grey ocean, and that their number amounted to nine hundred. Farthest out toward the broad Vesterhav this group bears the sinister name of "Hell"—partly because of the wild currents in the straits, which are strong enough to sink a boat, and partly because of the many submarine rocks. If one is unfortunate enough to strike on one of them, the water begins to boil and fume and rage so that

generally boat and men are doomed. I have seen the islands on a bright and warm summer day—it was an idyll—the unendingly wide horizon reflected by the unendingly wide sea, and on every island, rock, and mountain millions of wild ducks, black-grouse, sea-hens, seagulls, and seals who had crept ashore and lay bathed in sun on the slopes of the naked rocks, and in the air and through all the little straits, new flocks of crying seabirds.

Except during the winter-fishings only two of these rocks are inhabited. Their inhabitants are a few cottagers in some small and narrow cots, grey as the sky and the sea in autumn.

I have also seen the same islands in judgment-weather, on a winter day, when ocean and sky were lost in a fury of smoke, when the islands, rocks, and mountains were like storming monsters who raged and whipped the sea, foaming, howling, hissing. It was evident that this was a playground for gruesome and unearthly forces both on land and sea.

Here lived Jeppe Kakse, who was a king of men, fishes, birds, and of all sorts of supernatural beings. He descended both from man and merman; his palace lay half below, half above the sea; he dealt in fish and his large yachts traded both with Bergen and with Nordland. His seven lovely daughters had long, yellow fish-bellies and golden earrings, and used to lie on the waves in moonlight, playing their harps of gold and singing their alluring songs to wreck the passing ships. Both the folk song and the fairy tale describe a wedding which Jeppe Kakse gave for one of his daughters. And the splendour and pathos of the tale is the voyage of these wedding-guests across the water. It proves that the islands—or the greatest part of them at least—are inhabited after all, perhaps not by human beings, but anyway by the fantastic fairy-tale people.

They arrive, some riding on fish, others driving whale or seal, others again flying like sea-eagles or ptarmigans. Here we find the bogey degraded to scullery-boy. Drowned fishermen have to serve at table, and a perished clergyman—dressed in his clerical garb—must perform the wedding-ceremony.

It is obvious that modern schools and education, so-called, have largely killed the belief in fairy tales in many districts. And with the fairy tales our original peasant-culture, the creative originality in construction, in handicraft, and in the art of wall-decorations, has been killed as well. And together with the schools and the new era came the bad taste in architecture, came the plush and the mechanics. This is a chapter of its own.

But the fairy tale, in spite of all, still lives right down to our present day.

I remember that once when I was shooting in the Valdres mountains, I entered a cheese farm to get a rest, a glass of milk, and a smoke. The

dairymaid, a pretty woman of about forty, looked very sad and she told me that she had just experienced something very tragic and peculiar.

One morning earlier in the summer she suddenly saw a lot of strange cows—black, white, and speckled—around the farm. Snatching a broom she ran out to drive away the cattle. But when she came outside she could not see a single cow—not as much as the hoof of a cow. This was very odd and she told the old dairymaid in the neighbouring farm about it.

The old woman asked: "Is your daughter with you in the farm?" "Yes," was the reply. "Ah, the poor girl," was all the woman answered.

Some time after the little girl was suddenly taken ill and died, and the poor mother who told me this added that now she knew why it had all happened. A few weeks before, when she had thrown out some hot water, she had forgotten to say: "Hush-sh" beforehand.

So the fairy tales still live in many parts of the country.

Asbjörnsen has given a very typical picture of a fairy-tale night in a rich country-house. The proprietor is in the drawing-room talking political nonsense, but in the large kitchen the mistress of the house is surrounded by her daughters, maids, servants, and cottagers. The women are working by the light from a blazing fire in the open hearth. The blacksmith is telling stories, and they all listen. The dairymaid, who has to go to the byre to milk the cows, shudders, and the boy, who has to go out in the dark to feed the horses, is not very courageous either.

But at last they have to go.

They are already disposed for mysterious and unnatural happenings. The courtyard is pitch-dark, and in the byre the only illumination is a match put between the timbers of the wall. There is darkness enough left to make the animals look like muffled and disguised beings. Is it a wonder that things which are not quite natural seem to be moving about here and there? In the stables the boy must grope his way in darkness to find the fodder. Is it strange that the hay seems alive—full of shaggy fantastic things?

Thus the fairy tales of the byres and the stables are created, and they have many many variations which go far back in history. In the stables all is simple enough. Here lives the domestic goblin, he loves one of the horses and is always keeping its mane well braided. However badly the farmer treats this horse, it is always fat and strong, for the goblin gives it special fodder. The fairy tales of the byre are more varied. Here the mystic powers are dark, sombre, and evil, but, of course, the byre was always the territory of woman, so it is easy enough to explain.

The question is: are the fairy tales in every case merely fiction and lies? Has it all been invented by man? Did man give the landscape its

soul or is the contrary possible? Did the forests, the rivers, the mountains, the ocean, all have their spirit before man stole it?

Personally I think that if we had ten instead of our five often rather defective senses, we should see and feel a great deal more than we do now.

Almost every one of us has experienced hours alone with nature, when we have felt a reality which lay outside our everyday consciousness, when new ears and new eyes were opened in our inner being, and when woods, mountains, and oceans were manifested in new and strange lives and beings. What is truth? I have heard a poet insist that the landscape fairy tale is the spiritual origin of man. Who knows?

But there is hardly a nation since the days of Greece which is more indebted to its own landscape fairy tales than the Norwegian. When Asbjörnsen and Moe discovered them and brought them forth in the masterly form they did, it meant nothing less than the spiritual awakening of Norway. What the country has created since in the way of poetry, music, and painting as the fullest expression of Norwegian nature, disposition, and national character—that is another chapter. We can divide people into two categories—those who have the fairy tale living in them, and all the others. It sometimes happens that we meet people from whose soul we seem to hear the gush of seas and forests, but we certainly meet quite enough of the grey factory-souls, who are nothing but paragraphs and numbers.

A charcoal-burner sits in solitude on the dark mountain-slopes of Tönset. He is alone with the frost, the gloom, the forest, and the stars, miles away from any human beings. His only comrades are the glowing lumps of charcoal. There he must sit as the God of Fire, taking care of the flames all the night long. It is so silent around him that he can hear the footfall of a fox far, far away in the hills to the north.

And it is now that his mind and senses change so that he is no longer a man, but gloom, stars, and forest. And it is now that the gloom, the forest, the frost, and the snow have human minds. The night begins to bring forth new creations. A new reality is awakening. Stone and stub become living things. The snow on a branch is a face, the root of a tree is a shaggy being. And at daybreak, when the charcoal-burner's day-consciousness returns, the lonely man has something strange, something dark, something shaggy in his memory. And a new fairy tale has been born.

This man was perhaps our great-grandfather, and though he may have had neither gold nor wealth to leave us, yet he has left us something which has perhaps a greater value still—his lonely nights on the mountain-slopes of Tönseth.

Or it may be that a fisher-boat lies on the glittering ocean some miles off the entrance to the Trondhjemsfjord. It is summer and midnight sun. The man in the boat is catching halibut. He can just see the

snow-covered peaks of the Lofoten Mountains in the far east as a white line between sky and sea. The ocean lies in heavy swelling masses with a red column from the sun in the west, and the entire western horizon is a paradise of clouds on fire, reflected by the shining ocean. Gateways of sun here open toward deep, unending fairylands, and as the fisher is lost in contemplation, his face looks red as blood with all the light and colours out there.

And in such an hour the fisherman hears the singing of ocean, sun, and western sky. It is now that the mermaid raises her golden head above the sea and plays her harp of gold so alluringly that even the boat lies motionless and listening. The man in the boat was perhaps our ancestor, and after all we are never really poor if we have inherited something from his nights on the sunlit ocean.

FINLAND

Introductory Note

IN THE *Kalevala* Finland has provided one of the world's great basic books. Its verse and style were very happily adopted by Longfellow as a model for *Hiawatha* and have thus become familiar to countless English readers who know nothing of the Finnish original. It was, however, the patriotic verse of Runeberg that made the nation realize her identity and in recent years writers like Aho the novelist and Professor Koskenniemi, one of whose essays follows, have done much by their work to establish sound standards of achievement.

* * *

V. A. KOSKENNIEMI

VEIKKO ANTERO KOSKENNIEMI was born in Oulu in 1885. Called to Turun Yliopisto in 1921 to occupy the first chair of native and general literature, he has been Rector of the University since 1925. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Helsinki. He has published among other things several collections of poetry of which the most widely known are: *Runoja* (Poems, 1906), *Hiilivalkea* (Embers, 1913), *Elegioja* (*Elegies*, 1917), and *Uusia Runoja* (New Poems, 1924). He has written four collected volumes of essays and descriptions of travel, and has received several of the state awards for literary productions.

The following essay appears by permission of the author.

MONTAIGNE'S "ESSAYS"

THOSE manifold thoughts which a Guienne nobleman set down in a quiet tower-chamber of the *château* of Montaigne three and a half centuries ago during tempestuous times have retained their vitality even to our day. They have been carried into posterity by no great passion, by no strong poetic fancy, by no elevated character which might arouse our admiration, nor yet by any powerfully individualized personality whose outlines would differ radically from those of the majority of mankind: the secret of the vigour of his essays is solely in their wisdom, in their total lack of bias, which is exceptional not only for the times in which Montaigne lived but which is something rare and alien to humanity in general. Beside him Voltaire has the effect

of a blind zealot, Goethe of a mystic. One could scarcely say of him that he is profound, yet he can easily convince his reader that his contentions are right in whatever fields they may lie. Even in his superficiality there is something of genius. He sets himself no harder problems than he can solve. His thought trips with light tread in every direction. It does not get very far, but it is thoroughly at home in the environment in which the life of the ordinary mortal moves.

Montaigne lacked the logic and passion necessary for a philosopher in the accepted sense of the word; he lacked the imagination and passion needed in order to be a poet. He has thought out his ideas for his own benefit: if there is profit and pleasure in them for others as well it is due to the fact that others can derive benefit and can be amused by the same matters as Montaigne himself. His alert mind has seen that all things are relative and he plays with people's fallacies and beliefs but he guards against making any tenet out of his doubting. He does not deny even the most wondrous of miracles because the denial would of itself be akin to a rite of faith. He speaks neither for nor against, nor does he generally grant that man has any possibility of knowing truth. Our science is a body of uncertain hypotheses, our morality a lot of customs that vary with different peoples and at different times, our philosophy, the empty rattle of brains. Science itself drives us into the arms of ignorance. The ideas of different philosophers are in conflict with each other on all questions of greatest importance, nor can one make any contention however absurd but what some philosopher would not already have wasted his wits in an effort to prove it right. And Montaigne feels "gratitude" toward the girl of Miletus who on seeing the philosopher Thales gazing continually upward put some obstacle in his path so as to make him stumble thus reminding him that there would be time to devote to matters above the clouds after one had minded what lay at one's feet.

Montaigne's own philosophy has indeed centred its whole interest on what is at one's feet, or in pondering the question of how he, Montaigne, could better live his life, with less of care and more of wisdom. In this aspiration of his Montaigne approaches very closely the ancient Epicureans, whom he frequently cites and in whose intellectual sphere he is thoroughly at home. His nearest spiritual kin should be sought perhaps among the old Romans, among whom the Horatius Flaccus of the letters and satires is as his spiritual twin-brother.

Montaigne's philosophy, like Horatius's, is at bottom the ethics of selfishness. We have, to be sure, the right to love one thing and another—country, family, fame—"but ourselves only with a lasting affection." However near to us anything else may be, it must not be one with us, nor so attached to us that we could not disengage ourselves from it without tearing our skins or wrenching some part of us. "The thing of greatest value in the world is to know how to devote oneself

to oneself." Solitude, according to Montaigne, is man's best and most natural environment. Only in solitude can he feel free and only in mutual companionship with himself can he find real enjoyment. The right kind of solitude can be enjoyed in the midst of the city or in kings' palaces as well, if one has been able to detach oneself from the "strong grip" that binds us to people and alienates us from ourselves.

But man is not free in life unless he is free from the fear of death too. We can certainly not be rid of it by not thinking about death, but on the contrary only by having it continually in mind, by becoming accustomed to it, by learning to be at home in it. Thus we snatch from it its greatest advantage over us, its strangeness. In preparing ourselves for death we prepare ourselves for freedom, and only he who has learned to die is free from life's slavery. And Montaigne adds eloquence borrowed of Lucretius to his own powers of argument to prove what a simple, natural, little-to-be-feared happening death really is. But Montaigne's idea differs from the ancient Stoic scorning of death in that it lacks all contemptuous, heroic elements. Montaigne's ideal is, as Lanson has pointed out, the humble submission of the peasant who sees in death only something ordinary and natural.

To live, to function, to die according to nature, *naturae convenienter,* is wisdom which Montaigne has certainly not learned from Horatius, although it coincides perfectly with the conception of the Roman poet. Both love the idyllic and the peaceful and together with these urban enjoyments as well, which must not, however, be so ungoverned that their well-being is jeopardized. Both are conservative by nature and Montaigne especially often declares himself as loathing reforms, which give rise only to unrest and easily destroy the little good which there is in existing conditions. And he speaks with evident approval of the Thurian lawmaker who decreed that every one who wanted an old law repealed or a new one made must appear before the populace with a rope around his neck, so that he could be hanged at once if all did not accept their reforms. He likewise understands fully the danger there is in revolution, that when once the majesty of the state has been lowered from the highest peaks to midground, it soon slips from there to the lowest ground. Everybody, therefore, does most wisely to leave society and politics in peace, to shut himself up in his Tusculum in order to care for his health and to rejoice in living as much as he can. The last-named is the easier if one acquires habits that are according to nature. Knowledge, too, is useful, not for its own sake, but as a means to the art of living. Valuable hints can be gleaned from ancient writers as to the way in which best to avoid those dangers which at all times and in all places threaten our fragile happiness. Montaigne himself who learned to speak Latin before he could speak French knows the literature of Rome as he knows his five fingers. His extraordinary knowledge in this field has been of real harm to the form of his essays,

which have sometimes gained the character of a mosaic from the too frequent Latin quotations. Montaigne loves comfort too much to go searching for an expression for some thought, if he can find it already expressed by an ancient writer.

Montaigne's freedom from prejudice makes him a foe to all political and religious intolerance, and in the midst of the time of the Inquisition he speaks vehemently against torture and cruelty. He comes forward as a protector of animals, too, nor does he concede man any superior position in creation by reason of his intellect. Even great philosophers in certain situations can appear much more stupid than the fox or the stork, and a gosling has as much right as has a human being to say, "All that there is in the universe bears upon me."

Montaigne talks much about himself, frankly, but without vanity. His work is in a way a confession, but as a matter of fact nothing is revealed in it which the author himself is not ready to defend in some light. He lays bare the human in himself and rejoices himself in the find. He considers that he is a representative of humanity, with his virtues and his faults, and he encourages the reader to learn to know himself through his aid. He seems continually to be saying: "Such am I, Michel de Montaigne—behold, my reader, are you not greatly like me?"

Some one has said that were we to cut Montaigne's words they would bleed, so vascular and alive are they. This metaphor is not quite appropriate, to my mind. It is true, to be sure, that Montaigne often enriches and enlivens his style with experiences and descriptions taken from everyday life, but his style is nevertheless too passionless, too lightly flowing, too painless, to bring to mind only the colour of blood. Rather do his sentences seem in their intellectual brilliance like transparent glass that lets the sun shine through but which casts no shadow. His work is the product of the head, dictated by a cold, clear brain, and if the heart does succeed at times in making its voice heard, it has come about only by reason of the fact that what we think is not independent of that which we love and of that which we hate.

RUSSIA

Introductory Note

FOR more than two hundred years Russia lay in the grip of the Mongols, during which time all signs of culture vanished. It was from Ivan I that deliverance came, and the way was then prepared for the development of Russian civilization. Peter the Great did much to improve the status of the Russian language by instituting reforms in the alphabet and by ordering its use in the courts of justice and for administrative purposes. He also encouraged the making of translations from foreign languages. This was typical of the general movement for Europeanization and it had certain disadvantages in that it has tended to hamper the growth of Russian literature proper and encouraged a too great dependence on outside sources. It obscured what there was of the old Russian culture and prevented the growth of a national tradition. Added to this there have been the enormous difficulties due to tyranny, poverty, and lack of education. Russian writers have been like voices crying in the wilderness. Although their country was so vast and the population so great they have been painfully conscious that there were comparatively few who could apprehend their message. The result has been a sort of numbness which has paralysed them and a hopeless pessimism which has coloured all that they have written.

But Russian prose at its best is wonderfully lucid. No word-pictures are more revealing than those given us by writers like Tolstoy and Turgenev. The conditions we have described have not favoured the essay, but despite this some memorable work has been produced. It is noteworthy that in Russia the influence of Addison was very marked. There were, indeed, in the reign of Catherine, several satirical journals beginning with Kozítski's *All Kinds of Things* which contained attacks, more or less veiled, against the existing order. The English *Spectator* and *Tatler* were well known by means of translations, and *All Kinds of Things* clearly cultivated the Addisonian style. Novikòv followed with *The Drone*, and later he edited *The Painter* and *The Purse*. Of these *The Painter* was most significant and exercised a wide influence on the writers of the years immediately following.

* * *

TSAR ALEXIS MIKHAILOVICH

Born in 1629, Tsar Alexis, the father of Peter the Great, reigned from 1645 to 1676. He was not a man of letters, but both his official and private correspondence show him to have been an attractive personality and a man of culture, after the Byzantine manner. Though it was during his reign that Russia entered on the way of Europeanization, he may be taken as the type of all that is most refined in the old Russian civilization.

The following extract is the preface of an official instruction to the Tsar's falconers. This version is taken from the *Slavonic Review*, June 1924, by permission of the Editors.

RULES OF FALCONRY

THE Lord Tsar and Great Prince, Alexis Mikhailovich, autocrat of all Great, and Little, and White Russia, has decreed this new model and regulation, for the honour and increase of his royal, beautiful, and glorious sport of falconry.

And in accordance with his royal decree let there be nothing done without stateliness, or without well-regulated and admirable order; and let all things have their honour and their place and their model regulated by writ, because, though a thing be small, but if it be in due form honoured, well-proportioned, harmonious, stately, no one will shame it, nor blame it; every one will praise, every one will honour and admire, so that even so small a business is honoured and regulated and ordered in due measure. For honour and order is accorded to each thing, great or small, for this reason honour strengthens it and increases its strength; good order places it, announces its beauty and admirableness, harmony makes it acceptable; without honour nothing will become firm and strong; disharmony kills it and introduces laxity. So let every reader read this, and understand, and acquire knowledge, and praise, but not blame me the author.

What is necessary to everything? Measure, proportion, consistency, strength; then in it and around it, stateliness, harmony, good order. Nothing unless it be well proportioned, and have all the afore-described qualities, can become consistent and strong.

Ye, most of all, should read this book of the beautiful and glorious sport, assiduous and wise sportsmen, that ye may perceive and comprehend many good and reasonable things. If you read it with understanding, you will find in it much for your solace and for your good; if not, you will inherit much that is joyless and evil.

I pray and beseech you, wise, noble, and praiseworthy sportsmen,

become experienced in all that is good; first of all in stateliness, honesty, orderliness, in the regulations of falconry for the headmen, and for the birds and for the men; then seek your joy in the field and savour this joy in the right time. And let your hearts be joyful and let not your minds be oppressed by your griefs and sorrows.

For greatly does this field-sport ease weary hearts, and greatly does this bird-hunting amuse the sportsman with joyful mirth and exhilarate him. Unspeakably glorious and admirable is the hunting of the ger-falcon.

Beautiful to look at and exhilarating is the high flight of the falcon. Cunning is the flight and attack of the tercel. Beautiful also the flight and attack of the merlin. Next to these, pleasing and joyful is the hunting of a well-bred hawk, his way of flying to the water and of approaching the bird.

The foundation of all sport is the discernment of the sportsman for season and time, and the distribution of the birds according to their prey. But for the true sportsman there may be no question about season and time. It is always time, and the weather is always fine to take the field.

Be sportsmanlike, amuse yourselves with this good sport and enjoy it joyously and heartily and gaily, for it is good to keep away all sorrow and spleen. Choose your days, ride out often, let the bird fly on a catch, without sloth and spleen, that the birds might not forget their cunning and beautiful art.

O my glorious counsellors, my true and able sportsmen, be joyous and mirthful, let your hearts enjoy and appreciate this goodly and gay sport in all years to come.

To this is written in His Majesty's hand:

These maxims for your souls and bodies; but never forget about truth and justice, and charitable love and military exercise; there is one time for work, and another for enjoyment.

* * *

NIKOLAY NOVIKÒV

Nikolay Ivanovich Novikòv (1744-1818) is the embodiment of all that was most generous and enlightened in the Russia of his time. He began his literary career in 1769-1774 with satirical journals, after the model of Steele and Addison. The following extract is taken from *The Painter* (Zhivopisets), which was suppressed in 1773 for its too great outspokenness toward the social evils of the time. Later Novikòv did splendid service as a disinterested and public-spirited publisher. He was a Freemason and did much for the moral enlightenment of Russian society. Soon after the French Revolution he was arrested by order of Catherine II and spent five years in solitary con-

finement. On Catherine's death he was released and lived in retirement for the rest of his life.

The following extract from *The Painter* is taken from L. Wiener's *Anthology of Russian Literature* by permission of Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, Ltd.

PARENTAL ADVICE

TO MY SON FALALÉY: Is that the way you respect your father, an honourably discharged captain of dragoons? Did I educate you, accursed one, that I should in my old age be made through you a laughing-stock of the whole town? I wrote you, wretch, in order to instruct you, and you had my letter published. You fiend, you have ruined me, and it is enough to make me insane! Has such a thing ever been heard that children should ridicule their parents? Do you know that I will order you to be whipped with the knout, in strength of ukases, for disrespect to your parents! God and the Tsar have given me this right, and I have power over your life, which you seem to have forgotten. I think I have told you more than once that if a father or mother kills a son, they are guilty only of an offence against the church.[1] My son, stop in time! Don't play a bad trick upon yourself: it is not far to the Great Lent, and I don't mind fasting then. St. Petersburg is not beyond the hills, and I can reach you by going there myself.

Well, my son, I forgive you for the last time, at your mother's request. If it were not for her, you would have heard of me ere this, nor would I have paid attention to her now, if she were not sick unto death. Only I tell you, look out: if you will be guilty once more of disrespect to me, you need not expect any quarter from me. I am not of Sidórovna's[2] kind: let me get at you, and you will groan for more than a month.

Now listen, my son: if you wish to come into my graces again, ask for your resignation, and come to live with me in the country. There are other people besides you to serve in the army. If there were no war now, I should not mind your serving, but it is now wartime, and you might be sent into the field, which might be the end of you. There is a proverb: "Pray to God, but look out for yourself"; so you had better get out of the way, which will do you more good. Ask for your discharge and come home to eat and sleep as much as you want, and you will have no work to do. What more do you want? My dear! it is a hard chase you have to give after honour. Honour! Honour! It is not much of an honour, if you have nothing to eat. Suppose you will get no decoration of St. George, but you will be in better health than

[1] For which the punishment would be a penance of fasting.

[2] His wife's name.

all the cavaliers of the order of St. George. There are many young people who groan in spite of their St. George, and many older ones who scarcely live: one has his hands all shot to pieces, another his legs, another his head: is it a pleasure for parents to see their sons so disfigured? And not one girl will want you for a husband.

By the way, I have found a wife for you. She is pretty well off, knows how to read and write, but, above all, is a good housekeeper: not a blessed thing is lost with her. That's the kind of a wife I have found for you. May God grant you both good counsel and love, and that they should give you your dismissal! Come back, my dear: you will have enough to live on outside of the wife's dowry, for I have laid by a nice little sum. I forgot to tell you that your fiancée is a cousin of our Governor. That, my friend, is no small matter, for all our cases at law will be decided in our favour, and we will swipe the lands of our neighbours up to their very barns. I tell you it will be a joy, and they won't have enough land left to let their chickens out. And then we will travel to the city, and I tell you, my dear Falaléy, we are going to have a fine time, and people will have to look out for us. But why should I instruct you? You are not a baby now, it is time for you to use your senses.

You see I am not your ill-wisher and teach you nothing but that is good for you and that will make you live in greater comfort. Your uncle Ermoláy gives you the same advice; he had intended to write to you by the same messenger. We have discussed these matters quite often, while sitting under your favourite oak where you used to pass your time as a child, hanging dogs on the branches, if they did not hunt well for the rabbits, and whipping the hunters, if their dogs outran yours. What a joker you used to be when you were younger! We used to split with laughter looking at you. Pray to God, my friend! You have enough sense to get along nicely in this world.

Don't get frightened, dear Falaléy, all is not well in our house: your mother, Akulína Sidórovna, is lying on her death-bed. Father Iván has confessed her and given her the extreme unction. It is one of your dogs that was the cause of the ailment. Somebody hit your Nalétka with a stick of wood and broke her back. When she, my little dove, heard that, she fainted away, and fell down like dead. When she came to again, she started an inquiry with the matter, which so exhausted her that she came back scarcely alive, and had to lie in bed. Besides, she emptied a whole pitcher of cold water, which gave her a fever. Your mother is ill, my friend, very ill! I am waiting every minute for God to take her soul away. So I shall have to part, dear Falaléy, from my wife, and you from your mother and Nalétka. It will be easier for you to bear the loss than for me; Nalétka's pups, thank the Lord! are all alive. Maybe one of them will take after his mother, but I shall never have such a wife again.

Alas, I am all undone! How can I ever manage to look after all things myself? Cause me no more sorrow, but come home and get married, then I shall at least be happy to have a daughter-in-law. It is hard, my dear Falaléy, to part from my wife, for I have got used to her, having lived with her for thirty years. I am guilty before her for having beaten her so often in her lifetime; but how could it be otherwise? Two pots staying a long time together will get knocked a great deal against each other. Indeed it could not be otherwise: I am rather violent, and she is not yielding; and thus, the least thing gave occasion for fights. Thank the Lord! she was at least forgiving. Learn, my son, to live well with your wife; though we have had many a quarrel, yet we are living together, and now I am sorry for her. It's too bad, my friend, the fortune-tellers cannot do your mother any good: there have been a lot of them here, but there is no sense in it, only money thrown away. And now I, your father, Trifón, greet you and send you my blessing.

My Darling Falaléy Trifónovich: What kind of tricks have you been playing there, darling of my heart? You are only ruining yourself. You have known Pankrátevich ere this, so why don't you take care of yourself? If you, poor wretch, got into his hands, he would maim you beyond mercy. There is no use denying it, Falaléy, he has a diabolical character, the Lord forgive me for saying so! When he gets in a temper, all my trying to soothe him does no good. When he begins to yell, it's a shame to leave the holy images in the room. And you, my friend, just think what you have done! You have given his letter to be published! All his neighbours are now making fun of him: "A fine son you have! He is ridiculing his father." They say a great deal more, but who can know all that the evil-minded people say? God help them, they have their own children to look to, and God will pay them their due. They always find fault with somebody else's children, and think that theirs are faultless: well, they had better take a closer look at their own children!

Take good care of yourself, my friend, and don't anger your father, for the devil could not get along with him. Write him a kind letter, and lie yourself out of the affair: that would not be a great sin, for you would not be deceiving a stranger. All children are guilty of some misbehaviour, and how can they get along without telling their fathers some lie? Fathers and mothers do not get very angry with their children for that, for they are of necessity their friends. God grant you, darling of my heart, good health!

I am on my death-bed; so do not kill me before my time, but come to us at once, that I may have my last look at you. My friend, I am feeling bad, quite bad. Cheer me up, my shining light, for you are my

only one, the apple of my eye—how can I help loving you? If I had many children, it would not be so bad. Try to find me alive, my dear one: I will bless you with your angel, and will give you all my money which I have hoarded up in secret from Pankrátevich, and which is for you, my shining light.

Your father gives you but little money, and you are yet a young boy, and you ought to have dainty bits and a good time. You, my friend, are yet of an age to enjoy yourself, just as we did when we were young. Have a good time, my friend, have a good time, for there will later come a time when you will not think of enjoyment. My dear Falaléy, I send you one hundred roubles, but don't write father about it. I send it to you without his knowledge, and if he found it out, he would give me no rest. Fathers are always that way: they only know how to be surly with their children, and they never think of comforting them. But I, my child, have not the heart of a father, but of a mother: I would gladly part with my last kopek, if that would add to your pleasure and health.

My dear Falaléy Trifónovich, my beloved child, my shining light, my clever son, I am not feeling well! It will be hard for me to go away from you. To whose care shall I leave you? That fiend will ruin you; that old brute will maim you some day. Take good care of yourself, my shining light, take the best care you can of yourself! Leave him alone, for you can't do anything with that devil, the Lord forgive me for saying so! Come to our estate, my dear one, as soon as you can. Let me get a look at you, for my heart has the presentiment that my end has come. Good-bye, my dear one, good-bye, my shining light: I, your mother Akulína Sidórovna, send you my blessing and my humblest greeting, my shining light. Good-bye, my dove: do not forget me!

* * *

ALEXANDER HERZEN

Alexander Ivanovich Herzen (Gertsen) was born in 1812 and died in 1870. He left Russia in 1847, took part in the European revolutionary movements of 1848, and after their failure settled in London where he founded a free Russian press. His paper, *The Bell*, started in 1857, exercised a great influence upon Russian politics. He was a writer of the French school, not averse to emotional rhetoric. His literary reputation rests chiefly on his autobiography, *My Past and Thoughts*, which, alongside with the main narrative, contains fragments and essays, one of which is here reproduced. Like many of his writings it reflects his disillusionment after the hopes of 1848.

The following essay is taken from Constance Garnett's translation of *My Past and Thoughts* by permission of Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

THE DREAM

DO YOU remember, friends, how lovely was that winter day, bright and sunny, when six or seven sledges accompanied us to Tchornaya Gryaz, when for the last time we clinked glasses and parted, sobbing?

. . . Evening was coming on, the sledge crunched through the snow, you looked mournfully after us and did not divine that it was a funeral and a parting for ever. All were there but one, the dearest of all; he alone was far away, and by his absence seemed to wash his hands of my departure.

That was the 21st of January, 1847.

Seven years[1] have passed since then, and what years! Among them were 1848 and 1852.

All sorts of things happened in those years, and everything was shattered—public and personal: the European revolution and my home, the freedom of the world and my individual happiness.

Of the old life not one stone remained standing. At that time my powers had reached their fullest development; the previous years had given me pledges for the future. I left you full of daring and reckless self-reliance, with haughty confidence in life. I was in haste to tear myself away from the little group of people who had been so closely knit together and had come so close to each other, bound by a deep love and a common grief. I was lured by distance, space, open conflict, and free speech. I was seeking an independent arena, I longed to try my powers in freedom. . . .

Now I expect nothing: after what I have seen and experienced, nothing will move me to much wonder or to deep joy; joy and wonder are curbed by memories of the past and fear of the future. Almost everything has become a matter of indifference to me, and I desire as little to die to-morrow as to live long years; let the end come as accidentally and senselessly as the beginning.

And yet I have found all that I sought, even recognition from this old self-complacent world—and at the same time I have lost all my faith, all that was precious to me, have met with betrayal, treacherous blows from behind, and indeed a moral corruption of which you in Russia have no conception.

It is hard for me, very hard, to begin this part of my story; avoiding it, I have written the preceding parts, but at last I am brought face to face with it. But away with weakness: what one could live through, one must have the strength to remember.

[1] Written at the end of 1853.

From the middle of the year 1848 I have nothing to tell of but agonizing experiences, unavenged insults, undeserved blows. My memory holds nothing but melancholy images, my own mistakes and other people's: mistakes of individuals, mistakes of nations. When there was hope of salvation, death crossed the path. . . .

. . . The last days of our life in Rome conclude the happy part of my memories, that begin with the awakening of thought in childhood and youthful vows on the Sparrow Hills.

Alarmed by the Paris of 1847, I had opened my eyes to the truth for a moment, but was carried away again by the current of events seething about me. All Italy was "awakening" before my eyes! I saw the King of Naples tamed and the Pope humbly asking the alms of the people's love—the whirlwind which set everything in movement carried me, too, off my feet; all Europe took up its bed and walked—in a fit of somnambulism which we took for awakening. When I came to myself, all was over; la Somnambula, terrified by the police, had fallen from the roof; friends were scattered or were furiously slaughtering one another. . . . And I found myself alone, utterly alone, among the graves and the cradles—their guardian, defender, avenger, and I could do nothing just because I tried to do more than the common.

And now I sit in London where chance has flung me—and I stay here because I do not know what to do. An alien race swarms about me and hurries hither and thither, wrapped in the heavy breath of ocean; a world dissolved into chaos, lost in a fog in which all outlines are blurred, in which light becomes a murky glimmer.

. . . And that other land—washed by the deep blue sea under the canopy of deep blue sky . . . it is the one bright spot left on this side of the grave.

O Rome, how I love to return to your deceptions, how gladly I recall day by day the time when I was intoxicated with you!

. . . A dark night. The Corso is filled with people, here and there are torches. It is a month since a republic has been proclaimed in Paris. News has come from Milan—there they are fighting, the people demand war, there is a rumour that Charles Albert is on the way with troops. The talk of the angry crowd is like the intermittent roar of waves which alternately break with a splash and pause for a breathing space. The crowds form into ranks. They go to the Piedmont Ambassador to find out whether war has been declared.

"Fall in, fall in with us," shout dozens of voices.

"We are foreigners."

"All the better; Santo Dio, you are our guests."

We joined the ranks.

"The front place for the guests, the front place for the ladies, *le donne forestiere!*"

And with passionate shouts of approval the crowd parted to make way. Cicerovacchio and with him a young Roman poet, the author of the people's songs, pushed their way forward with a flag, the tribune shook hands with the ladies and with them stood at the head of ten or twelve thousand people—and all moved forward in that majestic and harmonious order which is peculiar to the Roman people.

The leaders went into the Palazzo, and a few minutes later the drawing-room doors opened on the balcony. The ambassador came out to appease the people and to confirm the news of war; his words were received with frantic joy. Cicerovacchio was on the balcony in the glaring light of torches and candelabra, and beside him under the Italian flag stood four young women, all four Russians—was it not strange? I can see them now on that stone platform, and below them the swaying multitude, mingling with shouts for war and curses for the Jesuits, "*Evviva le donne forestiere!*"

In England, they and we should have been greeted with hisses, abuse, and perhaps stones. In France, we should have been taken for *agents provocateurs*. But here the aristocratic proletariat, the descendants of Marius and the ancient tribunes, gave us a warm and genuine welcome. We were received by them into the European struggle . . . and with Italy alone the bond of love, or at least of warm memory, is still unbroken.

And was all that . . . intoxication, delirium? Perhaps—but I do not envy those who were not carried away by that beautiful dream. The sleep could not last long in any case: the ruthless Macbeth of real life had already raised his hand to murder sleep and . . .

My dream was past—it has no further change.[1]

* * *

IVAN TURGENEV

Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-1883) was the most famous Russian novelist of the 'Fifties, and the first Russian author to achieve a great European reputation. His masterpieces are well known to the English public through the admirable translations of Mrs. Garnett. The *Poems in Prose* (or *Senilia*, as he first named them) from which present extracts are taken, belong to the last years of his life (1879-1882). Like all his later work they are imbued with a fatalistic and misanthropic pessimism.

These extracts are reprinted from Constance Garnett's translation of *Dream Tales and Prose Poems* by permission of Messrs. William Heinemann, Ltd.

[1] English in the original.—*Translator's note.*

I. THE COUNTRY

THE last day of July; for a thousand versts around, Russia our native land.

An unbroken blue flooding the whole sky; a single cloudlet upon it, half floating, half fading away. Windlessness, warmth . . . air like new milk!

Larks are trilling; pouter-pigeons cooing; noiselessly the swallows dart to and fro; horses are neighing and munching; the dogs do not bark and stand peaceably wagging their tails.

A smell of smoke and of hay, and a little of tar, too, and a little of hides. The hemp, now in full bloom, sheds its heavy, pleasant fragrance.

A deep but sloping ravine. Along its sides willows in rows, with big heads above, trunks cleft below. Through the ravine runs a brook; the tiny pebbles at its bottom are all a-quiver through its clear eddies. In the distance, on the border-line between earth and heaven, the bluish streak of a great river.

Along the ravine, on one side, tidy barns, little storehouses with close-shut doors; on the other side, five or six pinewood huts with boarded roofs. Above each roof, the high pole of a pigeon-house; over each entry a little short-maned horse of wrought iron. The window-panes of faulty glass shine with all the colours of the rainbow. Jugs of flowers are painted on the shutters. Before each door, a little bench stands prim and neat; on the mounds of earth, cats are basking, their transparent ears pricked up alert; beyond the high door-sills, is the cool dark of the outer rooms.

I lie on the very edge of the ravine, on an outspread horse-cloth; all about are whole stacks of fresh-cut hay, oppressively fragrant. The sagacious husbandmen have flung the hay about before the huts; let it get a bit drier in the baking sunshine; and then into the barn with it. It will be first-rate sleeping on it.

Curly, childish heads are sticking out of every haycock; crested hens are looking in the hay for flies and little beetles, and a white-lipped pup is rolling among the tangled stalks.

Flaxen-headed lads in clean smocks, belted low, in heavy boots, leaning over an unharnessed waggon, fling each other smart volleys of banter, with broad grins showing their white teeth.

A round-faced young woman peeps out of window; laughs at their words or at the romps of the children in the mounds of hay.

Another young woman with powerful arms draws a great wet bucket out of the well. . . . The bucket quivers and shakes, spilling long, glistening drops.

Before me stands an old woman in a new striped petticoat and new shoes.

Fat hollow beads are wound in three rows about her dark thin neck, her grey head is tied up in a yellow kerchief with red spots; it hangs low over her failing eyes.

But there is a smile of welcome in the aged eyes; a smile all over the wrinkled face. The old woman has reached, I dare say, her seventieth year . . . and even now one can see she has been a beauty in her day.

With a twirl of her sunburnt finger, she holds in her right hand a bowl of cold milk, with the cream on it, fresh from the cellar; the sides of the bowl are covered with drops, like strings of pearls. In the palm of her left hand the old woman brings me a huge hunch of warm bread, as though to say, "Eat, and welcome, passing guest!"

A cock suddenly crows and fussily flaps his wings; he is slowly answered by the low of a calf, shut up in the stall.

"My word, what oats!" I hear my coachman saying. . . . Oh, the content, the quiet, the plenty of the Russian open country! Oh, the deep peace and well-being!

And the thought comes to me: what is it all to us here, the cross on the cupola of St. Sophia in Constantinople and all the rest that we are struggling for, we men of the town?

II. THE SPARROW

I WAS returning from hunting, and walking along an avenue of the garden, my dog running in front of me.

Suddenly he took shorter steps, and began to steal along as though tracking game.

I looked along the avenue, and saw a young sparrow, with yellow about its beak and down on its head. It had fallen out of the nest (the wind was violently shaking the birch-trees in the avenue) and sat unable to move, helplessly flapping its half-grown wings.

My dog was slowly approaching it, when, suddenly darting down from a tree close by, an old dark-throated sparrow fell like a stone right before his nose, and all ruffled up, terrified, with despairing and pitiful cheeps, it flung itself twice towards the open jaws of shining teeth.

It sprang to save; it cast itself before its nestling . . . but all its tiny body was shaking with terror; its note was harsh and strange. Swooning with fear, it offered itself up!

What a huge monster must the dog have seemed to it! And yet it could not stay on its high branch out of danger. . . . A force stronger than its will flung it down.

My Trésor stood still, drew back. . . . Clearly he too recognized this force.

I hastened to call off the disconcerted dog, and went away full of reverence.

Yes; do not laugh. I felt reverence for that tiny heroic bird, for its impulse of love.

Love, I thought, is stronger than death or the fear of death. Only by it, by love, life holds together and advances.

* * *

FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) is one of the greatest novelists of all times. His principal novels appeared between 1865 (*Crime and Punishment*) and 1880 (*The Brothers Karamazov*). His journalistic activities belong to the last twenty years of his life. Constitutionally averse to brevity, Dostoyevsky can hardly be called a great essayist, yet a selection of Russian essays would be strangely incomplete without him. The *Pushkin Address* here reproduced was delivered in 1880 at the unveiling of the great poet's statue in Moscow. It is one of the most influential and memorable of all Dostoyevsky's writings.

The version here given is the translation by S. S. Koteliansky and J. Middleton Murry taken from *Pages from the Journal of an Author* by permission of Messrs. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.

ON THE UNVEILING OF THE PUSHKIN MEMORIAL

PUSHKIN is an extraordinary phenomenon, and, perhaps, the unique phenomenon of the Russian spirit, said Gogol. I will add, "and a prophetic phenomenon." Yes, in his appearing there is contained for all us Russians something incontestably prophetic. Pushkin arrives exactly at the beginning of our true self-consciousness, which had only just begun to exist a whole century after Peter's reforms, and Pushkin's coming mightily aids us in our dark way by a new guiding light. In this sense Pushkin is a presage and a prophecy.

I divide the activity of our great poet into three periods. I speak now not as a literary critic. I dwell on Pushkin's creative activity only to elucidate my conception of his prophetic significance to us, and the meaning I give the word prophecy. I would, however, observe in passing that the periods of Pushkin's activity do not seem to me to be marked off from each other by firm boundaries. The beginning of *Eugène Onyegin*, for instance, in my opinion belongs still to the first

period, while *Onyegin* ends in the second period when Pushkin had already found his ideals in his native land, had taken them to his heart, and cherished them in his loving and clairvoyant soul. It is said that in his first period Pushkin imitated European poets, Parny and André Chénier, and above all, Byron. Without doubt the poets of Europe had a great influence upon the development of his genius, and they maintained their influence all through his life. Nevertheless, even the very earliest poems of Pushkin were not mere imitations, and in them the extraordinary independence of his genius was expressed. In an imitation there never appears such individual suffering and such depths of self-consciousness as Pushkin displayed, for instance, in *The Gipsies,* a poem which I ascribe in its entirety to his first period; not to mention the creative force and impetuosity which would never have been so evident had his work been only imitation. Already, in the character of Aleko, the hero of *The Gipsies,* is exhibited a powerful, profound, and purely Russian idea, later to be expressed in harmonious perfection in Onyegin, where almost the same Aleko appears not in a fantastic light, but as tangible, real, and comprehensible. In Aleko Pushkin had already discovered, and portrayed with genius, the unhappy wanderer in his native land, the Russian sufferer of history, whose appearance in our society, uprooted from among the people, was a historic necessity. The type is true and perfectly rendered, it is an eternal type, long since settled in our Russian land. These homeless Russian wanderers are wandering still, and the time will be long before they disappear. If they in our day no longer go to gipsy camps to seek their universal ideals in the wild life of the Gipsies and their consolation away from the confused and pointless life of our Russian intellectuals, in the bosom of nature, they launch into Socialism, which did not exist in Aleko's day, they march with a new faith into another field, and they work zealously, believing, like Aleko, that they will by their fantastic occupations obtain their aims and happiness, not for themselves alone, but for all mankind. For the Russian wanderer can find his own peace only in the happiness of all men; he will not be more cheaply satisfied, at least while it is still a matter of theory. It is the same Russian man who appears at a different time. This man, I repeat, was born just at the beginning of the second century after Peter's great reforms, in an intellectual society, uprooted from among the people. Oh, the vast majority of intellectual Russians in Pushkin's time were serving then as they are serving now, as civil servants, in government appointments, in railways or in banks, or earning money in whatever way, or engaged in the sciences, delivering lectures—all this in a regular, leisurely, peaceful manner, receiving salaries, playing whist, without any longing to escape into gipsy camps or other places more in accordance with our modern times. They go only so far as to play the liberal, "with a tinge of European Socialism," to which Socialism is given a certain

benign Russian character—but it is only a matter of time: What if one has not yet begun to be disturbed, while another has already come up against a bolted door and violently beaten his head against it? The same fate awaits all men in their turn, unless they walk in the saving road of humble communion with the people. But suppose that this fate does not await them all: let "the chosen" suffice, let only a tenth part be disturbed lest the vast majority remaining should find no rest through them. Aleko, of course, is still unable to express his anguish rightly: with him everything is still somehow abstract; he has only a yearning after nature, a grudge against high society, aspirations for all men, lamentations for the truth, which some one has somewhere lost, and he can by no means find. Wherein is this truth, where and in what she could appear, and when exactly she was lost, he, of course, cannot say, but he suffers sincerely. In the meantime a fantastic and impatient person seeks for salvation above all in external phenomena; and so it should be. Truth is as it were somewhere outside himself, perhaps in some other European land, with their firm and historical political organizations and their established social and civil life. And he will never understand that the truth is first of all within himself. How could he understand this? For a whole century he has not been himself in his own land. He has forgotten how to work, he has no culture, he has grown up like a convent schoolgirl within closed walls, he has fulfilled strange and unaccountable duties according as he belonged to one or another of the fourteen classes into which educated Russian society is divided. For the time being he is only a blade of grass torn from the roots and blown through the air. And he feels it and suffers for it, suffers often acutely! Well, what if, perhaps belonging by birth to the nobility and probably possessing serfs, he allowed himself a nobleman's liberty, the pleasant fancy of being charmed by men who live "without laws," and began to lead a performing bear in a gipsy camp? Of course a woman, "a wild woman," as a certain poet says, would be most likely to give him hope of a way out of his anguish and with an easy-going, but passionate belief, he throws himself into the arms of Zemphira. "Here is my way of escape; here I can find my happiness, here in the bosom of nature far from the world, here with people who have neither civilization nor law." And what happens? He cannot endure his first collision with the conditions of this wild nature, and his hands are stained with blood. The wretched dreamer was not only unfitted for universal harmony, but even for gipsies, and they drive him away—without vengeance, without malice, with simple dignity.

> Leave us, proud man,
> We are wild and without law,
> We torture not, neither do we punish.

This is, of course, all fantastic, but the proud man is real, his image sharply caught. Pushkin was the first to seize the type, and we should remember this. Should anything happen in the least degree not to his liking, he is ready to torment cruelly and punish for the wrong done to him, or, more comfortable still, he will remember that he belongs to one of the fourteen classes, and will himself call upon—this has happened often—the torturing and punishing law, if only his private wrong may be revenged. No, this poem of genius is not an imitation! Here already is whispered the Russian solution of the question, "the accursed question," in accordance with the faith and justice of the people. "Humble yourself, proud man, and first of all break down your pride. Humble yourself, idle man, and first of all labour on your native land" —that is the solution according to the wisdom and justice of the people. "Truth is not outside thee, but *in* thyself. Find thyself in thyself, subdue thyself to thyself, be master of thyself and thou wilt see the truth. Not in things is this truth, not outside thee or abroad, but first of all in thine own labour upon thyself. If thou conquer and subdue thyself, then thou wilt be freer than thou hast ever dreamed, and thou wilt begin a great work and make others free, and thou wilt see happiness, for thy life will be fulfilled and thou wilt at the last understand thy people and its sacred truth. Not with the Gipsies nor elsewhere is universal harmony, if thou thyself art first unworthy of her, malicious and proud, and thou dost demand life as a gift, not even thinking, that man must pay for her." This solution of the question is strongly foreshadowed in Pushkin's poem. Still more clearly is it expressed in *Eugène Onyegin,* which is not a fantastic, but a tangible and realistic poem, in which the real Russian life is embodied with a creative power and a perfection such as had not been before Pushkin and perhaps never after him.

Onyegin comes from Petersburg. Certainly from Petersburg: it is beyond all doubt necessary to the poem, and Pushkin could not omit that all-important realistic trait in the life of his hero. I repeat, he is the same Aleko, particularly when later on in the poem he cries in anguish:

> Why am I not, like the assessor of Tula,
> Stricken with palsy?

But now at the beginning of the poem he is still half a coxcomb and a man of the world; he had lived too little to be utterly disappointed in life. But he is already visited and disturbed by

> The demon lord of hidden weariness.

In a remote place, in the heart of his mother country, he is of course an exile in a foreign land. He does not know what to do and is some-

how conscious of his own quest. Afterwards, wandering over his native country and over foreign lands, he, beyond doubt clever and sincere, feels himself among strangers, still more a stranger to himself. True, he loves his native land, but he does not trust in it. Of course he has heard of national ideals, but he does not believe in them. He only believes in the utter impossibility of any work whatever in his native land, and upon those who believe in this possibility—then, as now, but few—he looks with sorrowful derision. He had killed Lensky out of spleen, perhaps from spleen born of yearning for the universal ideal—that is quite like us, quite probable.

Tatiana is different. She is a strong character, strongly standing on her own ground. She is deeper than Onyegin and certainly wiser than he. With a noble instinct she divines where and what is truth, and her thought finds expression in the finale of the poem. Perhaps Pushkin would even have done better to call his poem *Tatiana,* and not *Onyegin,* for she is indubitably the chief character. She is positive and not negative, a type of positive beauty, the apotheosis of the Russian woman, and the poet destined her to express the idea of his poem in the famous scene of the final meeting of Tatiana with Onyegin. One may even say that so beautiful or positive a type of the Russian woman has never been created since in our literature, save perhaps the figure of Liza in Turgeniev's *A Nest of Gentlefolk.* But because of his way of looking down upon people, Onyegin did not even understand Tatiana when he met her for the first time, in a remote place, under the guise of a pure, innocent girl, who was at first so shy of him. He could not see the completeness and perfection of the poor girl, and perhaps he really took her for a "moral embryo." She, the embryo! She, after her letter to Onyegin! If there is a moral embryo in the poem, it is he himself, Onyegin, beyond all debate. And he could not comprehend her. Does he know the human soul? He has been an abstract person, a restless dreamer, all his life long. Nor does he comprehend her later in Petersburg, as a grand lady, when in the words of his own letter to her "he in his soul understood all her perfections." But these are only words. She passed through his life unrecognized by him and unappreciated: therein is the tragedy of their love. But if at his first meeting with her in the village Childe Harold had arrived from England, or even, by a miracle, Lord Byron himself, and had noticed her timid, modest beauty and pointed her out to him, oh, Onyegin would have been instantly struck with admiration, for in these universal sufferers there is sometimes so much spiritual servility! But this did not happen, and the seeker after universal harmony, having read her a sermon, and having done very honestly by her, set off with his universal anguish and the blood of his friend, spilt in foolish anger, on his hands, to wander over

his mother country, blind to her, and, bubbling over with health and strength, he exclaims with an oath:

I am yet young and life is strong in me,
Yet what awaits me?—anguish, anguish, anguish.

This Tatiana understood. In the immortal lines of the romance the poet represented her coming to see the house of the man who is so wonderful and still so incomprehensible to her. I do not speak of the unattainable artistic beauty and profundity of the lines. She is in his study; she looks at his books and possessions; she tries through them to understand his soul, to solve her enigma, and "the moral embryo" at last pauses thoughtfully, with a foreboding that her riddle is solved, and gently whispers:

Perhaps he is only a parody?

Yes, she had to whisper this; she had divined him. Later long afterwards in Petersburg, when they meet again, she knows him perfectly. By the way, who was it that said that the life of the court and society had affected her soul for the worse, and that her new position as a lady of fashion and her new ideas were in part the reason for her refusing Onyegin? This is not true. No, she is the same Tanya, the same country Tanya as before! She is not spoiled; on the contrary, she is tormented by the splendid life of Petersburg, she is worn down by it and suffers—she hates her position as a lady of society, and whoever thinks otherwise of her, has no understanding of what Pushkin wanted to say. Now she says firmly to Onyegin:

Now am I to another given;
To him I will be faithful unto death.

She said this as a Russian woman, indeed, and here is her apotheosis. She expresses the truths of the poem. I shall not say a word of her religious convictions, her views on the sacrament of marriage—no, I shall not touch upon that. But then, did she refuse to follow him although she herself had said to him "I love you"? Did she refuse because she "as a Russian woman" (and not a Southern or a French woman), is incapable of a bold step or has not the power to sacrifice the fascination of honours, riches, position in society, the conventions of virtue? No, a Russian woman is brave. A Russian woman will boldly follow what she believes, and she has proved it. But she "is to another given; to him she will be faithful unto death." To whom, to what will she be true? To what obligations be faithful? Is it to that old general whom she cannot possibly love, whom she married only because "with tears and adjurations her mother did beseech her," and in her wronged and wounded soul was there then only despair and neither hope nor ray of light at all? Yes, she is true to that general, to her husband, to

an honest man who loves her, respects her, and is proud of her. Her mother "did beseech her," but it was she and she alone who consented, she herself swore an oath to be his faithful wife. She married him out of despair. But now he is her husband, and her perfidy will cover him with disgrace and shame and will kill him. Can anyone build his happiness on the unhappiness of another? Happiness is not in the delights of love alone, but also in the spirit's highest harmony. How could the spirit be appeased if behind it stood a dishonourable, merciless, inhuman action? Should she run away merely because her happiness lay therein? What kind of happiness would that be, based on the unhappiness of another? Imagine that you yourself are building a palace of human destiny for the final end of making all men happy, and of giving them peace and rest at last. And imagine also that for that purpose it is necessary and inevitable to torture to death one single human being, and him not a great soul, but even in some one's eyes a ridiculous being, not a Shakespeare, but simply an honest old man, the husband of a young wife in whom he believes blindly, and whom, although he does not know her heart at all, he respects, of whom he is proud, with whom he is happy and at rest. He has only to be disgraced, dishonoured, and tortured, and on his dishonoured suffering your palace shall be built! Would you consent to be the architect on this condition? That is the question. Can you for one moment admit the thought that those for whom the building had been built would agree to receive that happiness from you, if its foundation was suffering, the suffering of an insignificant being perhaps, but one who had been cruelly and unjustly put to death, even if, when they had attained that happiness, they should be happy for ever? Could Tatiana's great soul, which had so deeply suffered, have chosen otherwise? No, a pure Russian soul decides thus: Let me, let me alone be deprived of happiness, let my unhappiness be infinitely greater than the unhappiness of this old man, and finally let no one, not this old man, know and appreciate my sacrifice: but I will not be happy through having ruined another. Here is a tragedy in art, the line cannot be passed, and Tatiana sends Onyegin away. It may be said: But Onyegin too is unhappy. She has saved one, and ruined the other. But that is another question, perhaps the most important in the poem. By the way, the question, Why did not Tatiana go away with Onyegin has with us, in our literature at least, a very characteristic history, and therefore I have allowed myself to dwell upon it. The most characteristic thing is that the moral solution of the question should have been so long subject to doubt. I think that even if Tatiana had been free and her old husband had died and she became a widow, even then she would not have gone away with Onyegin. But one must understand the essential substance of the character. She sees what he is. The eternal wanderer has suddenly seen the woman whom he had previously scorned in a new and un-

attainable setting; in this setting is perhaps the essence of the matter. The girl whom he almost despised is now adored by all society—society, the awful authority for Onyegin, for all his universal aspirations. That is why he throws himself, dazzled, at her feet. Here is my ideal, he cries, here is my salvation, here is the escape from my anguish. I did not see her then, when "happiness was so possible, so near." And as before Aleko turned to Zemphira, so does Onyegin turn to Tatiana, seeking, in his new, capricious fancy the solution of all his questions. But does not Tatiana see this in him, had she not seen it long ago? She knows beyond a doubt that at bottom he loves his new caprice and not her, the humble Tatiana as of old. She knows that he takes her for something else, and not for what she is, that it is not her whom he loves, that perhaps he does not love anyone, is incapable of loving anyone, although he suffers so acutely. He loves a caprice, but he himself is a caprice. If she were to follow him, then to-morrow he would be disillusioned and look with mockery upon his infatuation. He has no root at all, he is a blade of grass, borne on the wind. She is otherwise: even in her despair, in the painful consciousness that her life has been ruined, she still has something solid and unshakable upon which her soul may bear. There are the memories of her childhood, the reminiscences of her country, her remote village, in which her pure and humble life had begun: it is

> the woven shade,
> Of branches that o'erhang her nurse's grave.

Oh, these memories and the pictures of the past are most precious to her now; these alone are left to her, but they do save her soul from final despair. And this is not a little but rather much, for there is here a whole foundation, unshakable and indestructible. Here is contact with her own land, with her own people, and with their sanctities. And he —what has he and what is he? Nothing, that she should follow him out of compassion, to amuse him, to give him a moment's gift of a mirage of happiness out of the infinite pity of her love, knowing well beforehand that to-morrow he would look on his happiness with mockery. No, these are deep, firm souls, which cannot deliberately give their sanctities to dishonour, even from infinite compassion. No, Tatiana could not follow Onyegin.

Thus in *Onyegin,* that immortal and unequalled poem, Pushkin was revealed as a great national writer, unlike any before him. In one stroke, with the extreme of exactness and insight, he defined the very inmost essence of our high society that stands above the people. He defined the type of the Russian wanderer before our day and in our day; he was the first to divine him, with the flair of genius, to divine his destiny in history and his enormous significance in our destiny to be. Side by side he placed a type of positive and indubitable beauty in the

person of a Russian woman. Besides, of course, he was the first Russian writer to show us, in his other works of that period, a whole gallery of positively beautiful Russian types, finding them in the Russian people. The paramount beauty of these lies in their truth, their tangible and indubitable truth. It is impossible to deny them, they stand as though sculptured. I would remind you again. I speak not as a literary critic, and therefore do not intend to elucidate my idea by a particular and detailed literary discussion of these works of the poet's genius. Concerning the type of the Russian monkish chronicler, for instance, a whole book might be written to show the importance and meaning for us of this lofty Russian figure, discovered by Pushkin in the Russian land, portrayed and sculptured by him, and now eternally set before us in its humble, exalted, indubitable spiritual beauty, as the evidence of that mighty spirit of national life which can send forth from itself figures of such certain loveliness. This type is now given; he exists, he cannot be disputed; it cannot be said that he is only the poet's fancy and ideal. You yourself see and agree: Yes, he exists, therefore the spirit of the nation which created him exists also, therefore the vital power of this spirit exists and is mighty and vast. Throughout Pushkin sounds a belief in the Russian character, in its spiritual might; and if there is belief, there is hope also, the great hope for the man of Russia.

> In the hope of glory and good
> I look without fear ahead,

said the poet himself on another occasion, but the words may be applied directly to the whole of his national, creative activity. And yet no single Russian writer, before or after him, did ever associate himself so intimately and fraternally with his people as Pushkin. Oh, we have a multitude of experts on the people among our writers, who have written about the people, with talent and knowledge and love, and yet if we compare them with Pushkin, then in reality, with one or at most two exceptions among his latest followers, they will be found to be only "gentlemen" writing about the masses. Even in the most gifted of them, even in the two exceptions[1] I have just mentioned, sometimes appears a sudden flash of something haughty, something from another life and world, something which desires to raise the people up to the writer, and so to make them happy. But in Pushkin there is something allied *indeed* to the people, which in him rises on occasion to some of the most naïve emotions. Take his story of *The Bear,* and how a peasant killed the bear's mate; or remember the verses,

> Kinsman John, when we begin to drink . . .

and you will understand what I mean.

[1] Turgenev and Tolstoy are meant.

All these treasures of art and artistic insight are left by our great poet as it were a landmark for the writers who should come after him, for future labourers in the same field. One may say positively that if Pushkin had not existed, there would not have been the gifted writers who came after him. At least they would not have displayed themselves with such power and clarity, in spite of the great gifts with which they have succeeded in expressing themselves in our day. But not in poetry alone, not in artistic creation alone: if Pushkin had not existed, there would not have been expressed with the irresistible force with which it appeared after him (not in all writers, but in a chosen few), our belief in our Russian individuality, our now conscious faith in the people's powers, and finally the belief in our future individual destiny among the family of European nations. This achievement of Pushkin's is particularly displayed if one examines what I call the third period of his activity.

I repeat, there are no fixed divisions between the periods. Some of the works of even the third period might have been written at the very beginning of the poet's artistic activity, for Pushkin was always a complete whole, as it were a perfect organism carrying within itself at once every one of its principles, not receiving them from beyond. The beyond only awakened in him that which was already in the depths of his soul. But this organism developed and the phases of this development could really be marked and defined, each of them by its peculiar character and the regular generation of one phase from another. Thus to the third period can be assigned those of his works in which universal ideas were pre-eminently reflected, in which the poetic conceptions of other nations were mirrored and their genius re-embodied. Some of these appeared after Pushkin's death. And in this period the poet reveals something almost miraculous, never seen or heard at any time or in any nation before. There had been in the literatures of Europe men of colossal artistic genius—a Shakespeare, a Cervantes, a Schiller. But show me one of these great geniuses who possessed such a capacity for universal sympathy as our Pushkin. This capacity, the pre-eminent capacity of our nation, he shares with our nation, and by that above all he is our national poet. The greatest of European poets could never so powerfully embody in themselves the genius of a foreign, even a neighbouring, people, its spirit in all its hidden depth, and all its yearning after its appointed end, as Pushkin could. On the contrary, when they turned to foreign nations European poets most often made them one with their own people, and understood them after their own fashion. Even Shakespeare's Italians, for instance, are almost always Englishmen. Pushkin alone of all world poets possessed the capacity of fully identifying himself with another nationality. Take scenes from *Faust,* take *The Miserly Knight,* take the ballad "Once there Lived a

Poor Knight"; read *Don Juan* again. Had Pushkin not signed them, you would never know that they were not written by a Spaniard. How profound and fantastic is the imagination in the poem "A Feast in Time of Plague." But in this fantastic imagination is the genius of England; and in the hero's wonderful song about the plague, and in Mary's song,

> Our children's voices in the noisy school
> Were heard. . . .

These are English songs; this is the yearning of the British genius, its lament, its painful presentiment of its future. Remember the strange lines:

> Once as I wandered through the valley wild. . . .

It is almost a literal transposition of the first three pages of a strange mystical book written in prose by an old English sectarian—but is it only a transposition? In the sad and rapturous music of these verses is the very soul of Northern Protestantism, of the English heresiarch, of the illimitable mystic with his dull, sombre, invincible aspiration, and the impetuous power of his mystical dreaming. As you read these strange verses, you seem to hear the spirit of the times, of the Reformation, you understand the warlike fire of early Protestantism, and finally history herself, not merely by thought but as one who passes through the armed sectarian camp, sings Psalms with them, weeps with them in their religious ecstasies, and with them believes in their belief. Then set beside this religious mysticism, religious verses from the Koran or "Imitations from the Koran." Is there not here a Mohammedan, is it not the very spirit of the Koran and its sword, the naïve grandeur of faith and her terrible, bloody power? And here is the ancient world; here are *Egyptian Nights*, here sit the gods of earth, who sat above their people like gods, and despised the genius of the people and its aspirations, who became gods in isolation, and went mad in their isolation, in the anguish of their weariness unto death, diverting themselves with fanatic brutalities, with the voluptuousness of creeping things, of a she-spider devouring her male. No, I will say deliberately, there never had been a poet with a universal sympathy like Pushkin's. And it is not his sympathy alone, but his amazing profundity, the reincarnation of his spirit in the spirit of foreign nations, a reincarnation almost perfect and therefore also miraculous, because the phenomenon has never been repeated in any poet in all the world. It is only in Pushkin; and by this, I repeat, he is a phenomenon never seen and never heard of before, and in my opinion a prophetic phenomenon, because . . . because herein was expressed the national spirit of his poetry, the national spirit in its future development, the national spirit of our future, which is already implicit in the present, and it was expressed prophetically.

For what is the power of the spirit of Russian nationality if not its aspiration after the final goal of universality and omni-humanity? No sooner had he become a completely national poet, no sooner had he come into contact with the national power, than he already anticipated the great future of that power. In this he was a seer, in this a prophet.

For what is the reform of Peter the Great to us, not merely for the future, but in that which has been and has already been plainly manifested to us? What did that reform mean to us? Surely it was not only the adoption of European clothes, customs, inventions, and science. Let us examine how it was, let us look more steadily. Yes, it is very probable that at the outset Peter began his reform in this narrowly utilitarian sense, but in course of time, as his idea developed, Peter undoubtedly obeyed some hidden instinct which drew him and his work to future purposes, undoubtedly more vast than narrow utilitarianism! Just as the Russian people did not accept the reform in the utilitarian spirit alone; but undoubtedly with a presentiment which almost instantly forewarned them of a distant and incomparably higher goal than mere utilitarianism. I repeat, the people felt that purpose unconsciously, but it felt it directly and quite vitally. Surely we then turned at once to the most vital reunion, to the unity of all mankind! Not in a spirit of enmity (as one might have thought it would have been) but in friendliness and perfect love, we received into our soul the geniuses of foreign nations, all alike without preference of race, able by instinct from almost the very first step to discern, to discount distinctions, to excuse and reconcile them, and therein we already showed our readiness and inclination, which had only just become manifest to ourselves, for a common and universal union with all the races of the great Aryan family. Yes, beyond all doubt, the destiny of a Russian is pan-European and universal. To become a true Russian, to become a Russian fully, (in the end of all, I repeat) means only to become the brother of all men, to become, if you will, a universal man. All our slavophilism and Westernism is only a great misunderstanding, even though historically necessary. To a true Russian, Europe and the destiny of all the mighty Aryan family is as dear as Russia herself, as the destiny of his own native country, because our destiny is universality, won not by the sword, but by the strength of brotherhood and our fraternal aspiration to reunite mankind. If you go deep into our history since Peter's reform, you will already find traces and indications of this idea, of this dream of mine, if you will, in the character of our intercourse with European nations, even in the policy of the state. For what has Russian policy been doing for these two centuries, if not serving Europe, perhaps, far more than she has served herself. I do not believe this came to pass through the incapacity of our statesmen. The nations of Europe know how dear they are

to us. And in course of time I believe that we—not we, of course, but our children to come—will all without exception understand that to be a true Russian does indeed mean to aspire finally to reconcile the contradictions of Europe, to show the end of an European yearning in our Russian soul, omni-human and all-uniting, to include within our soul by brotherly love all our brethren, and at last, it may be, to pronounce the final Word of the great general harmony, of the final brotherly communion of all nations in accordance with the law of the gospel of Christ! I know, I know too well, that my words may appear ecstatic, exaggerated, and fantastic. Let them be so, I do not repent having uttered them. They ought to be uttered, above all now, at the moment that we honour our great genius who by his artistic power embodied this idea. The idea has been expressed many times before. I say nothing new. But chiefly it will appear presumptuous. "Is this our destiny, the destiny of our poor, brutal land? Are we predestined among mankind to utter the new word?"

Do I speak of economic glory, of the glory of the sword or of science? I speak only of the brotherhood of man; I say that to this universal, omni-human union the heart of Russia, perhaps more than all other nations, is chiefly predestined; I see its traces in our history, our men of genius, in the artistic genius of Pushkin. Let our country be poor, but this poor land "Christ traversed with blessing, in the garb of a serf." Why then should we not contain His final word? Was not He Himself born in a manger? I say again, we at least can already point to Pushkin, to the universality and omni-humanity of his genius. He surely could contain the genius of foreign lands in his soul as his own. In art at least, in artistic creation, he undeniably revealed this universality of the aspiration of the Russian spirit, and therein is a great promise. If our thought is a dream, then in Pushkin at least this dream has solid foundation. Had he lived longer, he would perhaps have revealed great and immortal embodiments of the Russian soul, which would then have been intelligible to our European brethren; he would have attracted them much more and closer than they are attracted now, perhaps he would have succeeded in explaining to them all the truth of our aspirations; and they would understand us more than they do now, they would have begun to have insight into us, and would have ceased to look at us so suspiciously and presumptuously as they still do. Had Pushkin lived longer, then among us too there would perhaps be fewer misunderstandings and quarrels than we see now. But God saw otherwise. Pushkin died in the full maturity of his powers, and undeniably bore away with him a great secret into the grave. And now we, without him, are seeking to divine his secret.

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MIKHAIL SALTYKOV

MIKHAIL EVGRAFOVICH SALTYKOV (N. Shchedrin), who was born in 1826 and died in 1889, was famous as a satirical writer. Most of his satirical essays are journalism rather than literature, and too topical to stand resurrection. But some of the allegorical "fables" on political and social subjects which he wrote in his later years possess greater concentration and a comprehensive symbolism. One of these is here reproduced. Saltykov's masterpiece is his only regular novel, *The Golovlev Family* (1876). An English translation of this has been published.

The following essay is taken from Beatrix L. Tollemache's translation of *The Village Priest* by permission of Messrs. Ernest Benn, Ltd.

KONYAGA

KONYAGA[1] lies by the roadside and slumbers heavily.

The peasant has just unharnessed him and let him loose to feed. But Konyaga had no appetite. It was hard work to clear the furrows of stones; it required their whole strength to overcome these obstacles.

Konyaga was the kind of beast which a peasant usually owns: harassed, worn out, narrow-chested, with ribs sticking out, shoulders chafed, and broken knees. Konyaga drooped his head, and the mane on his neck was in a tangle. Tears trickled down from his eyes and his nostrils were wet, his upper lip hung down like a pancake. It is difficult to get much work out of such a beast, but yet he must work. All day long Konyaga wears his collar. In summer he works in the field from morning to night; in winter transports produce till the very moment the thaw begins and the roads are bad.

Konyaga has nothing to recruit his strength. His food is such that you can hear his teeth champing idly. In summer, when they drive the herds at night to graze, he can gain some strength from the tender grass, but in winter he drags carts to the market, and when he gets home he feeds on chopped straw which is rotten. In spring, when they drive out the cattle into the fields, they have to lift him up, and there is no grass in the fields, except where some withered tuft is left, which has been overlooked by the cattle in the past autumn.

The life of Konyaga was hard, but it was fortunate that the peasant was kind and did not needlessly harass him. When they went out into the field together he would call out, "Now, my dear, give a good pull," and Konyaga heard the well-known cry and he understood. He

[1] *Konyaga* is a depreciatory or pitying derivative from *Kon* (horse).

stretched out his pitiful bony frame, leant on his fore-legs and then forced his hind-legs forward, and bent his head down on his breast. "Now, rascal, gee up," says the peasant, and leans his own weight on the plough, while his hands cling to it like pincers, his feet sink in the clods of earth, and he keeps his eye on the ploughshare lest it should shift and make a crooked line.

From one end of the field to the other they cut the furrow, and both shudder. Ah, that was death that drew near! Death for both, for Konyaga and for the peasant. Every day came death.

The dusty country lane runs like a narrow ribbon from one hamlet to another; now it disappears in a village, and then it reappears and again it vanishes, one knows not whither; but where it stretches the fields guard it on each side, and far and wide they hem it in. Even there, where earth and sky melt together, are fields and fields. They are golden, or green, or bare, but they circle round the village like an iron ring, from which there is no escape except through the wide, open, endless fields. Far away a man is walking; it may be that his legs are making progress in his hurried walk, but from this distance he appears to be marking time in the same place, as if he could not free himself from the restraining power of the far-stretching fields. This small, hardly discernible speck does not disappear in the distance, but only gets fainter. Fainter and fainter it grows, and suddenly vanishes as if space itself had sucked it in.

From age to age this menacing, immovable mass of country has lain as if spellbound, as if some enchantment had power to keep it in captivity. Who will come and release its powers from this prison? Who will call it forth into light? The solution of this problem has been allotted to the peasant and to Konyaga.

Both are struggling from the cradle to the grave to solve this problem, and they pour forth bloody sweat; but the fields do not give away their mysterious forces, those forces which would release the peasant from fetters and would heal the sore shoulders of Konyaga.

Konyaga lies on a sun-baked spot; no shrub grows near, and the air seems red-hot and catches the breath in your throat. Now and then a whirlwind drives the dust along the road; this is no refreshing breeze, but brings a great wave of sultriness. Gadflies and other insects, like mad creatures, torment Konyaga; they fill his ears and nostrils, and sting him in the sore places, and he—he shakes his ears and just mechanically shrinks from their sting. Is Konyaga asleep or is he dying—who can tell?

He is not able to complain that all his inner self seems burnt up from the intense heat and fearful strain. And God has refused even the consolation of complaint to the dumb animal.

Konyaga sleeps, but over his tormenting sufferings, which hinder his repose, there hover not dreams, but a disconnected stifling night-

mare—a nightmare in which not only are there no shapes, not even monsters, but heaps of specks, now black, now fiery, which move or rest conjointly with the tormented Konyaga and drag him with them into a bottomless abyss.

There is no end to the field; you cannot get out of it anywhere. Konyaga has drawn the plough afar and across it, yet he never reached the boundary of this land. Whether it is bare or flowery, or benumbed under a snowy winding-sheet, it stretches far and wide in its might; it does not provoke to strife with itself but straightway leads captive. It is not possible to guess its secret, nor to overcome, nor to exhaust it; as soon as it dies it is alive again. You cannot grasp which is death and which is life. But in life or in death the first and unchangeable eyewitness is Konyaga. For others these fields represent abundance, poetry, and vast spaces; but for Konyaga—they mean servitude. The land crushes him, takes away his last powers, and yet will not confess itself satisfied. Konyaga tramps from dawn to eve, and the moving swarm, a dark spot, goes before, and spreads and spreads over him. And now it is flitting in front of him, and now, while he dozes, he hears the call, "Gee up, my darling, my little rascal."

That fiery ball which is never extinguished from morn to eve pours down a stream of burning rays on Konyaga; rain and hail, snowstorm and frost never fail. . . . Nature to others is a mother; but for him only—she is a scourge and a torment. Every manifestation of her life becomes a torment to him, every season of blossom brings poison to him. For him there are no perfumes, no harmony of sounds, no garlands of flowers. He has no sensations except those of pain, of weariness, and of misfortune. Let the sun pour forth warmth and light on the face of Nature, let its rays call forth life and joy—poor Konyaga only knows one thing: that they add fresh misery to the countless miseries of which his life's web is woven.

There is no end to his labour. Every thought he has is spent in labour. For it he was conceived and born, and outside it he is not only of no use to anyone, but, as economical masters reckon, he is an encumbrance. All the surroundings among which he lives are arranged to this end: that he should not lose that muscular strength which is the source whence flow his powers of work. His food and rest are dealt out to him only in such measure as will enable him to fulfil his task. Let the field and Nature's elements cripple him, no one will trouble himself how many sore places are added to his legs, his shoulder, and his back. Happiness is not thought necessary for him, only such a life as will enable him to fulfil his toil. "It is not necessary," say they, "that he should be happy, but only that he should be just enough alive to bear his yoke and go through his labours."

Through how many ages he has borne this yoke he knows not, and

how many more ages he must bear it he has not reckoned up. He lives, as it were, plunged in a deep abyss, and of the many sensations which reach his body he is only conscious of the pains which his toil brings.

The very life of Konyaga seems marked with the brand of eternity. He cannot be said to live, and yet he does not die. The field, like an octopus, has sucked him into itself with countless feelers, and will not let him go from the fixed plot of land.

Whatever outward differences fate has meted out to him, he is yet always alone, always beaten, harassed, and hardly alive. Like the field, which he waters with his blood, he counts neither days, nor years, nor ages, but only eternity. He is dispersed everywhere, and whether it is here or there, he, in loneliness, drags out his miserable slavery, and always he remains the same lonely, nameless Konyaga. A sound core lives in him, neither dying, nor dismembered, nor destroyed. There is no end to this living core, that alone is clear. But of what nature is this life? And why has she enmeshed Konyaga in the web of immortality? Whence came this life and whither is it going? Surely the future will some day answer these questions. Or it may be it will remain as dumb and indifferent as the dark abyss of the past, which has peopled the world with phantoms and has sacrificed the living to them.

Konyaga slumbers, and the smart chargers pass by near him. No one at first sight would say that Konyaga the plough horse and Pustoplass the charger were sons of the same father. But the tradition of this kinship is not altogether lost.

Once upon a time there lived an old horse, and he had two sons, Konyaga and Pustoplass. The latter was courteous and sensitive, but Konyaga was rough and ill-bred. The old father endured the ill-breeding of Konyaga for a long time, and for years he treated his two sons equally, as an affectionate father would do; but at length he was provoked to anger and said, "This is my command throughout the ages: Konyaga shall eat straw, but Pustoplass oats." And so it happened from that time. Pustoplass was put in a warm stable with bedding of soft straw; he had as much mead as he could drink, and his crib was filled with corn; but Konyaga was put in a shed and a handful of rotten straw given him. "Champ with your teeth, Konyaga, and if you want to drink there is water in the pool."

Pustoplass had almost forgotten that he had a brother alive in the world. But suddenly he remembered, and felt sorry for him. "I am weary," said he, "of my warm stable, I have drunk enough of mead, and my ration of corn no longer is sweet in my throat. I will go and find out how my brother is spending his life."

He has found his brother, and lo, he appears incapable of dying! They beat him, but he lives! They feed him on straw, but he lives!

Wherever one looks, there he is, working in the fields; if you see him here one moment, in the twinkling of an eye he is already out there. It seems as if he had some protector over him, for though they may break a stick over his back they cannot break *him*.

Now the prancing chargers began to go round the farm horses. One of the chargers said: "It is impossible to drive away these farm horses, for they have amassed so much good, sound good sense by their unremitting labour; each one knows well that the ears don't grow higher than the forehead, and that you cannot break an axehead with a whip, and each lives quietly, wrapped up in wise sayings, as if he lay on the breast of Christ. Good luck to you, Konyaga; go on working."

Another exclaimed: "It is not altogether the result of his sound sense that his life is so solidly based. What is this sound sense? Is it something habitual, clear in its trivial details, reminding one of a mathematical formula, or an order given by the police? No, it is not this which preserves the invincibility of Konyaga, but it is because he bears in himself the life of the soul, and the soul of life, and while he holds these two treasures no rod can destroy him."

The third muttered: "What nonsense you are talking! What is this but an empty interchange of disconnected words? It is not for this reason that Konyaga remains uninjured, but because he has found for himself 'genuine work.' This work gives him a spiritual equilibrium, and reconciles his individual conscience with the conscience of the multitude, and endows him with that power of resistance which even ages of serfdom have not been able to destroy. Toil on, Konyaga, endure, store up strength, extract from labour that serenity of soul which we, the pampered chargers, have lost for ever."

But the fourth, who seemed to have just been brought from the tavern by the groom, added these words: "Ah, Sirs, you all think you can touch the sky with your finger. There is no special reason why you cannot drive away Konyaga; it is just because for ages he has been accustomed to his valley. And now if you were to break a whole tree over him he would still survive. He lies there, and you think there is no breath in his body, but stir him up well with the whip, and he gets on his feet and is gone. Whoever has an appointed task, does it. Reckon up how many of such crippled creatures are scattered over the fields—and they are all alike. Persecute them as much as you choose, but you will not diminish their number. At one moment they are gone, and the next moment they have sprung up out of the ground."

As all these remarks did not spring from present facts but from sorrow for Konyaga, the chargers discussed the matter and then began to reproach each other. But, luckily, at this moment the peasant appeared, and put an end to their disputes by these words, "Come, rascal, get up." And now the chargers were one and all filled with

delight, and with one accord cried out, "Look, look how he is stretching out his fore-legs and drawing up his hind-legs. Toil on, Konyaga, that is the thing to learn from you; you are the one to be imitated! Go it, rascal! Go it!"

* * *

LEO TOLSTOY

COUNT LEO NIKOLAYEVICH TOLSTOY (1828-1910) was the foremost figure in Russian letters in the second half of the nineteenth century. His greatest novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, were written in 1865-76. After 1880 he became converted to a new ethical Christianity, and his writings, moral and religious, acquired an unprecedented world-wide influence. As a master of powerful, direct, convincing prose he has no equal, but he was an orator and a prophet rather than an essayist.

The first of the following essays is reprinted from Mr. Aylmer Maude's *Life of Tolstoy* in the Centenary Edition of Tolstoy's works by permission of the Oxford University Press, and from *Essays, Letters, and Miscellanies* by permission of Thomas Y. Crowell Company, publishers of Tolstoy's works in America. The second has been translated by Mr. S. S. Koteliansky from the original Russian taken from Vol. III of Tolstoy's posthumous works, published by Alexandra Tolstoy (Leo Tolstoy's daughter) in 1912. It is here printed by permission of the translator.

I. FIRST RECOLLECTIONS

HERE are my first recollections (which I cannot reduce to order, not knowing what came first, what afterward, while of some I know not whether they were dreams or reality). But here they are.

I am tied down; I want to raise my arms, but I cannot do it, and I wail and weep and my cry is disagreeable to myself; but I cannot stop. It must be that some one stands bending over me, but I don't remember who. And all this takes place in a semi-darkness. But I remember that there are two. My crying has an effect on them, they are alarmed at my cry, but they do not unloose me as I wish, and I cry louder than ever. It seems to them necessary (that is, that I be tied down), while I know that it is not necessary, and I want to prove it to them, and I burst out into a cry disgusting to myself but unrestrainable.

I am conscious of the injustice and cruelty, not of people, because they pity me, but of fate, and feel pity for myself. I do not know and never shall learn what this was: whether they swaddled me when I was a suckling, and I pulled out my hands; or whether they swaddled

me when I was more than a year old so that I might not scratch the tetter; or whether I have gathered many impressions into one as happens in dreams—but apparently this was my first and most powerful impression of life. And it was not my crying or my suffering that I retain in my recollection, but the complication, the contradiction, of the impression. I wanted freedom; it would not disturb anyone, and I who needed the strength was weak while they were strong.

The second impression was pleasurable. I am sitting in a tub, and I am surrounded by a new and disagreeable odour of some object by which my small body is galled. Apparently this was bran, and apparently in the water and in the trough, but the novelty of the impression made by the bran awakened me, and I for the first time noticed and observed my little body, with the ribs plainly outlined, and the smooth, dark tub, and the nurse with her arms tucked up, and the dark, warm, threatening water, and the swash of it, and especially the feeling of smoothness of the wet edges of the tub when I put my little hands on it. Strange and terrible to think that from my birth up to my third year, all the time while I was nursing, while I was weaned, when I was beginning to creep, to walk, to speak, however I rack my memory, I can find no impression except these two.

When did I begin? When did I begin to live? And why is it pleasant to imagine myself as I was then, but it used to be terrible to me, as now it is terrible to many, to imagine myself as I shall be when I again enter into that condition of death from which there will be no recollections expressible in words? Was I not alive when I was beginning to look, to hear, to understand, to talk, when I slept, when I pressed my lips to my mother's breast, and laughed, and rejoiced my mother? I was alive and blissfully alive. Did I not then get all that whereby I live now, and get in such abundance, and so rapidly, that in all the rest of my life I have not got a hundredth part so much?

From a five-year-old child to me is only a step. From the new-born baby to the five-year-old child there is a terrible gap. From the embryo to the new-born baby there is an abyss. And from non-existence to the embryo there is not an abyss, but incomprehensibility. Moreover, space and time and cause are forms of thought and the existence of life outside of these forms, but all our life is a continually increasing subjection to these forms and then again emancipation from them.

The following recollections of mine refer to my fourth and fifth years, but even of these there are very few, and not one of these refers to life outside of the walls of my home.

Nature up to the age of five does not exist for me. All that I remember refers to bed and chamber. No grass, no leaves, no sky, no sun exist for me. It cannot be that they did not let me play with the flowers and leaves, or see the grass, that they did not protect me from

the sun, but up to five years, up to six years, there is not one recollection of what we call Nature. Apparently it is necessary to go away from her in order to see her, and I was Nature!

The recollection that comes after that of the tub is that of *Yeremeyevna.* "Yeremeyevna" was a word with which they used to frighten us children. And apparently they began early to frighten us with it, but my recollection of it is as follows:

I am in my little bed and feeling good and happy as always, and I should not remember this but suddenly my nurse, or some one of those that constituted my life, says something in a voice entirely new to me, and goes out, and I feel a sensation of terror besides that of gaiety. And I remember that I am not alone, but some one is there with me very much the same as I.

This must have been my sister Mashenka, a year younger than I, for our beds stood in one room together.

And I remember that there is a canopy over my bed, and my sister and I used to share our pleasures and terrors—whatever unexpected thing happened to us—and I used to hide in the pillow, and I would hide and peek out to look at the door from which I expected anything new and gay. And we used to laugh and hide and be full of expectations. And here comes some one in a gown and head-dress such as I had never seen before, but I know that it is the person who is always with me—a nurse or auntie, I don't know which, and this some one speaks in a deep voice which I recognize, and says something terrible about naughty children, and about Yeremeyevna! I squeal with terror and delight, and I am terrified, and at the same time delighted because I am terrified, and I wish that the one who frightened me did not know that I know her! We become silent, but soon again we begin to whisper on purpose to bring back Yeremeyevna.

Similar to the recollection of Yeremeyevna is another, apparently later in time because it is more distinct, but it always remains incomprehensible to me. In this remembrance the chief *rôle* is played by a German, Feodor Ivanovitch, our teacher; but I know assuredly that I was not as yet under his supervision, consequently this must have taken place before I was five. And this is my first impression of Feodor Ivanovitch. And it happened so early that I do not remember anyone—my brothers, nor my father, nor anyone. If I have an idea of any person whatever besides, it is only of my sister, and solely because she and I were associated in terror of Yeremeyevna.

With this recollection is connected also my first conception that our house had an upper story. How I got there, whether I went there by myself, or who took me there, I do not remember at all; I only remember that there were several of us, we all took hold of hands in a *khorovod;* among those holding one another by the hand were several

strange women—because I recollect that these were the laundry girls —and we all began to turn and spring, and Feodor Ivanovitch capered about, lifting his legs very high and making a terrible noise and thumping, and I had a consciousness that this was not the right thing to do, that it was bad, and I noticed him and I seemed to burst out crying, and it all came to an end.

This is all I remember up to my fifth year. I remember nothing of my nurses, my aunties, my brothers, my sisters, or of my father, or my rooms, or my toys—nothing at all. My recollections grow more definite from the time when I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and to the older boys.

When I was taken down to Feodor Ivanovitch and to the older boys, I experienced, for the first time, and therefore more strongly than ever again, the feeling called the sense of duty, called the sense of the cross, which every man is called upon to wear. I felt sorry to leave what I had grown accustomed to—accustomed to from eternity! I felt melancholy, poetically melancholy to leave, not so much the people, my sister, my nurse, my aunt, as the bed, the canopy, the pillows; and the new life into which I had entered was terrible to me. I tried to find something cheerful in the new life which was before me; I tried to credit the flattering speeches with which Feodor Ivanovitch allured me to himself. I tried not to see the scorn with which the boys received me, their younger brother; I tried to think that it was disgraceful for a big boy to live with girls, and that there was nothing good in the upstair life with the nurse; but in the depths of my soul I was terribly homesick, and I knew that I had irrevocably lost my innocence and joy, and only a feeling of personal dignity, a consciousness that I was doing my duty, sustained me.

Many times since in life it has been my fortune to undergo such moments at the dividing of the ways, where new paths opened out before me. I experienced a gentle grief at the irrevocableness of what was lost. And still I did not believe that it would be. Though they told me that I was to be taken down to the boys, I remember that my *khalat* with its belt, sewed to the back, which they put on me, seemed to separate me forever from the upper rooms, and I now, for the first time, noticed others besides those with whom I had lived upstairs, but the chief personage was the one at whose house I was living and whom I do not remember before. This was my Aunt T—— A——.[1] I remember her as short, stout, with black hair, kind, affectionate, gentle. She put on me my *khalat,* tightened the belt and fastened it, kissed me, and I saw that she was experiencing the same feelings as I was, that she was sorry, awfully sorry, but it had to be.

For the first time I realized that life is not play but hard work.

[1] Probably Tatyana Aleksandreyevna Eyelskaya.

Not otherwise shall I feel when I come to die; I shall discover that death or the future life is not play, but hard work.

May 17, 1878.

II. NOTES OF A MADMAN

A Fragment

OCTOBER 20, 1883. To-day I was taken to the Circuit Board to be examined, and the opinions were divided. They argued the point and decided that I was not mad. But they came to this decision only because all through the examination I held myself in with all my power so as not to speak out my mind. I did not speak out because I am afraid of a lunatic asylum—I'm afraid that there they will prevent me from doing my mad business. They have found me subject to effects and to some other such-like things, but of a sane mind. They have so found me, but I myself know that I am mad. The doctor prescribed a treatment for me, assuring me that, if I strictly followed his prescriptions, it would pass. Everything that worries me will pass. Oh, what wouldn't I give for it to pass! It's too agonizing. I will tell in order of time, how and wherefore the examination came about, how I went mad, and how I betrayed my madness.

Until the age of thirty-five I lived, like every one else, and there was nothing to notice about me. A something only in my first childhood, before the age of ten, happened to me resembling in a way my present state, but this happened only in fits, and not, as it does now, continuously. In my childhood it used to come over me somewhat differently. And this is just how it used to be.

I remember once I was preparing for bed, I was five or six years old then. My nurse Yevpraxia, a tall, thin woman, in a brown dress, with a tasselled cap on her head, with the skin under her chin hanging down, undressed me and helped me to get into my little bed.

"I'll do it myself, myself," I muttered, and stepped over the little rails.

"Now, lie down, lie down, Fedenka. See, Mitenka, the clever thing, has already lain down," she said to me, pointing with her head to my brother.

I jumped into the bed, holding her hand all the while. Then I let it go, dangled my feet under the blanket, and tucked myself in. And I felt so happy. I lay quiet, and thought: "I love nurse; nurse loves me and Mitenka; and I love Mitenka; and Mitenka loves me and nurse; and Taras loves nurse, and I love Taras, and Mitenka also loves him. And Taras loves me and nurse. And mammy loves me and nurse. And nurse loves mammy, and me, and daddy. And all love, and all are so happy."

And suddenly I hear the housekeeper come running in, and saying in a cross voice something about the sugar basin, and nurse in a cross voice answering she didn't take it. And I begin to feel pained, and afraid, and confused; and a terror, a cold terror comes over me, and I hide my head under the blanket. But even in the darkness of the blanket I find no relief. I remember, how a boy was once beaten in my presence, how he cried, and what a frightful face Foka had, when he was beating him. "Ah, you won't, you won't!" he kept on repeating, and beating him all the time. The boy said: "I won't." But Foka only repeated: "You won't?"—and went on beating him.

And then it came over me. I began to sob, to sob, and for a long time no one could calm me. Those sobs, that despair were the first fits of my present madness.

I remember, another time it came over me when auntie was telling us about Christ. She finished and wanted to go away, but we said to her: "Do tell us more about Jesus Christ."

"No, I have no time now."

"Do tell us!"

And Mitenka, too, asked her to tell. And auntie began telling us again what she had told us before. She told us that they had crucified Him, beaten Him, tortured Him, but He prayed all the time and did not condemn them.

"Auntie, why did they torture Him?"

"They were bad people."

"But He was good, wasn't He?"

"Now, enough, it's past eight now. Do you hear?"

"Why did they beat Him? He forgave them; but why did they beat Him? Was it painful? Auntie, did it give Him pain?"

"Now, enough, I'm going to have my tea."

"But perhaps it isn't true, perhaps they didn't beat Him?"

"Now, enough."

"No, no, don't go away. . . ."

And again it came over me. I sobbed, sobbed, and then began to knock my head against the wall.

So it would come over me in childhood. But from the age of fourteen, from the time sexual passion awoke in me, and I gave myself to vice, all that passed away, and I was a boy, like all other boys. Like all of us, brought up on fat, superfluous food, rendered effeminate, without any physical labour to do, and with all possible temptations to inflame sensuality, and in the company of boys equally spoilt, I was taught vice by boys of my age, and I gave myself up to it. Later on that vice gave place to another; I began to know women. And thus, seeking pleasure and finding it, I lived to the age of thirty-five. I was perfectly well, and there were no signs whatever of my madness.

Those twenty years of my sane life had passed over me so that now I remember scarcely anything of them, and recall them now only with difficulty and loathing.[1] Like all boys of my circle, mentally sane, I entered a public school, then the University, where I took my degree in the Faculty of Law. Then I served the state for a time, and then I became friends with her who is now my wife; I married and worked in the country, as they say. I brought up children, farmed and was a Justice of the Peace.

In the tenth year of my married life occurred the first fit that had happened to me since my childhood.

My wife and I had saved up money from an inheritance left her and from my redemption certificates[2] and we decided to buy an estate. I was, of course, very much concerned with increasing our fortune and with the desire to increase it in the wisest way, better than others would. I enquired then everywhere where estates were for sale and read all advertisements in the newspapers. I wished to make such a purchase so that the revenue brought in, or the timber cut, should cover the purchase price, and that I should get the estate for nothing. I was looking for such a fool who knew no better, and it seemed to me that I had found such a one.

An estate with large woods was for sale in the Penza province. From all I could learn, the vendor seemed to be just such a fool, and the wood would recoup me for the purchase of the estate. I made ready and set off.

First we went by railway (I took a servant with me), then we travelled post-chaise, changing horses at every stage. The journey was a very jolly one. My servant, a young, good-natured fellow, was as happy as I was myself. New places, new people; we travelled and were happy. We had yet over a hundred miles to go before we reached the estate. We decided to drive on, without stopping, only changing horses. Night fell, and we kept on driving. We began to doze. I fell into a doze, but suddenly awoke: I felt terrified by something. And, as it often happens, I awoke frightened, alert, as though I should never fall asleep again. "Why am I going? Where am I going?" suddenly came into my head. Not that I disliked the idea of buying an

[1] The following passage is struck out: "It was a wilderness, through which I was passing—a wilderness of carnal enjoyment, of spiritual stupefaction and deadliness. And the entrance into that wilderness, and the coming out of it was equally accompanied by struggle and pains. At fourteen came the struggles and pains of death; at thirty-five years came the struggles and pains of birth. At fourteen when I got to know the vice of bodily enjoyment, I grew terrified at it. All my being longed for it, and yet all my being seemed to be opposed to it.—*Translator's note.*

[2] On the abolition of serfdom in Russia the landlords received from the state a monetary compensation, in the form of so-called redemption certificates, for liberating their serfs.—*Translator's note.*

estate at a cheap price, but suddenly it seemed to me that I had no need whatever to travel to that remote place, that I should die there and then, in a strange place. And a dread fell upon me. Serguey, the servant, awoke; I took the opportunity of talking to him, I began talking about the country around there; he answered, joked, but I felt wearied. I talked of the people at home, of how we were going to buy the estate. And I was surprised at the jolly way in which he kept on answering. He found everything nice and jolly, and to me everything had lost all savour. But still, while I talked to him I felt easier. But, apart from the feeling of weariness and of dread, I began to feel tired, a desire to stop. It seemed to me I should feel easier if I went into a house, saw people, had tea, and, above all, could fall asleep.

We were approaching the town of Arzamas.

"Hadn't we better stop here for a while? To have a little rest," I said.

"Certainly."

"Is the town still far off?"

"It's seven miles from that post there."

The driver was a staid, precise, and silent fellow. His driving too was slow and tedious.

We drove on. I relapsed into silence, I felt easier because I was looking forward to a rest and hoped that there it would all pass. We drove, drove on in the darkness, it seemed to me a terribly long time. We drove into the town. The people were asleep. Through the darkness appeared little houses, the bells on the horses and the thudding of their hooves rang out, particularly resonant, as usually is the case, near houses. Here and there began also to appear large white houses. And it all was cheerless. I longed for the station-house, the samovar, and rest—to lie down.

At last we drove up to a little house with a pole. The little house was white, but it appeared to me awfully mournful, so that I was even seized with a dread. Quietly I got out.

Serguey quickly, dexterously, got out the necessary things, running about and stamping on the little steps. And the sound of his feet caused me anguish. I entered. A little hall. A sleepy man with a stain on his cheek—the stain seemed terrible to me—showed us a room. It was a gloomy room. I went in, and a still greater dread fell on me.

"Have you got a room where I can rest?" I asked.

"We have. Here it is."

A clean, whitewashed, square little room. How distressed, I remember, I was that the room turned out to be a square one. One window, with a little red curtain. A table of white birch and a sofa with curved sides. We went in. Serguey prepared the samovar, made the tea.

And I took a cushion and lay down on the sofa. I did not sleep, but heard Serguey drinking tea and calling me. I was terrified at the idea of getting up, lest I might drive sleep away, and I was terrified at the idea of sitting in the room. I didn't get up, and began to fall into a doze. I must have dropped off into a doze, for when I opened my eyes there was no one in the room, and it was dark. I was again as awake as I was in the carriage. To fall asleep, I felt, was a sheer impossibility. Why did I come here? Where am I dragging myself to? Why and where am I running away? I'm running away from something terrible and can't escape. I'm always with myself and it's I who am tormenting to myself. I—that's it, only myself. Neither the Penza estate, nor any estate will add to me or take away anything from me. And I—I am weary of myself, unbearable, tormenting to myself. I want to fall asleep, to forget myself, and I can't. I can't get away from myself.

I went out into the hall. Serguey slept on a narrow bench, with his arm thrown down, but in a sweet sleep, and the porter with the stain also slept. I had come out into the hall, thinking to get away from what was tormenting me. But *it* came out after me and cast a gloom over everything. A dread, a still greater dread, fell upon me.

"But how stupid!" I said to myself. "Why am I in anguish, what am I afraid of?"

"Of me," came the inaudible reply of the voice of death. "I am here."

A cold shiver ran through me. Yes, of death. He will come, he—there he is, but he must not be. If death were imminent I could not experience what I experienced now. Then I should be afraid. But now I was not afraid, only I saw, felt that death was approaching, and at the same time I felt that death must not be. My whole being felt the need, the right to live, and at the same time the consummation of death. And that inner rending was terrible. I made an effort to shake that horror off. I found a candlestick with a burnt-down candle, and lit it. The red flame of the candle and its size, a little less than that of the candlestick—all told the same tale. There is nothing in life, there is death, and he must not be.

I tried to think of what concerned me: of the purchase, of my wife. There was nothing cheerful in that, it all became nothing. Everything was shut off by the terror I felt at the idea that my life was perishing. I must fall asleep. I had lain down, but no sooner had I done so than suddenly I jumped up in terror. And the anguish, the anguish—the same anguish of spirit that comes before vomiting, but a spiritual one. Dreadful, terrible. One seems to be terrified by death, but when one remembers and thinks of life, then one is terrified by life that is dying. Life and death had become one. Something was trying to tear

my soul into pieces and could not divide it. Once again I went out to look at the sleepers; once again I tried to fall asleep; but all the while the same terror—red, white, and square. Something was being torn, but could not be divided. It was agonizing, and agonizingly dry and spiteful, not a drop of kindness could I find in myself, but only a smooth, calm spite to myself and to what had made me.

What had made me? God, they say. God. . . . Pray, I thought. A long time, twenty years. I did not pray and did not believe in anything, in spite of the fact that for the sake of decency I prepared for the sacrament every year. I began to pray: "God have mercy," "Our Lord," "Our Lady." I began making up prayers. I began to cross myself and to kneel on the ground, looking round and afraid that some one might see me. This as it were diverted me—the fear that some one might see me diverted me: and I lay down. But no sooner had I lain down and shut my eyes than again the same feeling of terror pulled at me and lifted me up. I could not bear it any longer, I woke the porter, I woke Serguey, told them to harness the horses, and we went away.

In the air, and in motion, I felt better. But I realized that a something new had invaded my soul and poisoned all my former life.

Toward night we arrived at the place. All day I struggled with my anguish and overcame it; but in my soul remained a terrible sediment: exactly as if a calamity had happened to me, and I could forget it only for a time, but it was there, at the bottom of my soul, and possessed me.

We arrived in the evening. The old steward (he was vexed that the estate was to be sold), received me well though not joyfully. Clean rooms with upholstered furniture. A new, shining samovar, a large tea service, honey with the tea. Everything was right. And as if remembering an old forgotten lesson, I reluctantly asked him about the estate. Nothing seemed to cheer me. Yet that night I fell asleep without anguish. I attributed it to this that I prayed again before going to bed.

And then I began living as I did before, but the fear of that anguish has hung over me ever since. I had to go on living without making any stops and, mainly, in my usual ways. Just as a pupil repeats a lesson learnt by heart, by habit, without thinking, so I had to go on living in order not to fall again into the power of that terrible anguish that had come over me for the first time in Arzamas.

I returned home safely, I did not buy the estate—I had not sufficient money—and began living as before, with one difference only that I began to pray and to go to church. It seemed to me as before; but it was not as before, as I remember it now. I lived by the interests formed previously, I kept to the lines laid down previously by

previous efforts, but I no longer undertook anything new. And in those previously formed interests my share was less. Everything seemed wearisome to me and I became devout. And my wife noticed it, and reproached me and nagged me for it. At home the anguish did not recur.

But once I went unexpectedly to Moscow—I decided to go in the afternoon, and in the evening I went off. There were some legal proceedings pending. I arrived in Moscow cheerful. During the journey I entered into a conversation with a Kharkov landlord about farming, banks, where to stop at hotels, and the theatre. We decided to stop at the same hotel, at the Hotel Moscow, in Myasnitskaya Street, and in the evening to hear *Faust*.

We arrived. I entered a little room. The heavy smell of the corridor was in my nostrils. The porter brought in my portmanteau, the maid lit the candle. The candle flared up, then the flame drooped, as always happens. In the next room some one gave a cough, probably an old man. The maid went out, and the porter remained asking whether he should unpack my portmanteau. The flame revived and lit up a wall paper blue with yellow stripes, a screen, a worn table, a little sofa, a window and the narrow size of the whole room. And suddenly the Arzamas terror stirred in me. "My God! How shall I spend the night here?" I thought.

"Please unpack it, dear fellow," I said to the porter in order to detain him. "I'll dress at once and go to the theatre," I thought.

The porter unpacked.

"Do, my dear fellow, tell the gentleman in number eight—he came with me—that I shall be ready directly and call on him."

The porter went out; I began to hasten to dress, afraid to glance at the walls. "What nonsense," I thought, "what am I afraid of? I'm not a child. I'm not afraid of ghosts. Of ghosts? I had rather be afraid of ghosts than of what I am afraid. Of what? Of nothing. Of myself. Oh, nonsense."

However, I put on a stiff, cool starched shirt, pushed the studs through, put on an evening jacket, new shoes, and called on the Kharkov landowner. He was ready. We drove to the theatre, to hear *Faust*. On the way there he stopped to have his hair trimmed. I had my hair cut at the French barber's, I chatted with the Frenchman, and bought a pair of gloves. Everything was right. I had quite forgotten my oblong room and the screen. In the theatre too it was pleasant. After the performance the Kharkov landlord suggested we should go and have supper. This was opposed to my habits, but when we came out of the theatre and he made the suggestion, I remembered the screen, and agreed.

It was after one o'clock when we returned to the hotel. I had had

two glasses of wine, an unusual thing for me, but I felt cheerful. But no sooner had we entered the corridor with the shaded lamp, and the smell of the hotel had caught me, than a shiver of terror ran down my spine. But there was nothing to be done. I shook my companion's hand, and entered my room.

I spent an awful night, worse than that at Arzamas. Only in the morning, when in the next room the old man began coughing, I fell asleep, and not on the bed, on which I tried several times to lie down, but on the sofa. All night long I suffered unbearably; again my soul was tormentingly rending itself from my body. I am alive, I lived, I must live, and all of a sudden—death, the destruction of everything. What is life for then? To die? . . . To kill myself right away? I am afraid. To wait until death comes? I am afraid still more. To live then. What for? In order to die? I could not get out of that circle. I took a book, read it, forgot myself for a minute, and again the same question and terror arose. I lay down on the bed, shut my eyes—worse still.

God has done it. Wherefore? They say: don't ask, but pray. Right. I prayed; I prayed again now, just as I did in Arzamas. But there and afterward I simply prayed like a child. But now my prayer had meaning: "if Thou art, reveal to me: wherefore I exist and what am I?" I knelt, repeated all the prayers I knew, I composed my own, adding: "Do reveal then to me." And I fell into a silence and waited for an answer. But no answer came as though there was no one who could answer. And I remained alone, with myself. And I kept on giving myself answers, instead of Him who did not wish to answer. "In order to live in a future life," I answered myself. But why then that uncertainty, that torment? I can't believe in a future life. I believed when I did not ask with the whole of my soul, but now I can't, I can't. If Thou art, Thou wouldst speak—to me, to people. But Thou art not, there is only despair. And I don't want it, I don't want it.

I was indignant. I asked Him to reveal to me the truth, to reveal Himself to me; I did everything which all are doing, yet He did not reveal Himself. "Ask and it shall be given unto you," I remembered, and I asked, and in that asking I found not comfort, but a respite. Perhaps, I did not ask, but renounced Him. "Walk away a foot from Him, and He will walk away a yard from you." I did not believe in Him, but I prayed, and yet He did not reveal anything to me. I called Him to account and condemned Him, I simply did not believe.

Next day I did my best to finish all my affairs in town so as to be spared another night in the hotel room. I did not finish everything, and went home for the night. I felt no anguish. That Moscow night

has still more changed my life, which had begun to change ever since that night at Arzamas. I began to concern myself still less with affairs, and an apathy came over me. I began also to grow weak in health. My wife demanded that I should take medical advice. She said that my talks about faith, about God were due to ill-health. But I knew that my weakness and ill-health came from the unsolved question within me. I tried not to give way to that question, and endeavoured by adhering to my habitual ways of living to fill life up. I went to church on Sundays and on feasts, I prepared myself for the sacrament, I even fasted, as I had begun doing since my journey to Penza, and I prayed, but rather by way of habit. I did not expect anything from that; it was as though I refused to tear up a bill of exchange and to protest it, despite the fact that I knew that the bill would not be met. I did it in case of emergency. My life, however, I did not occupy with farming—it repelled me by its struggle, I lacked the energy—but by reading reviews, papers, novels, by playing cards for small stakes; and the only display of energy I made was in hunting, an old habit of mine. All my life long I have been a hunter.

Once in the winter a neighbour—a hunter—called with hounds for a wolf hunt. I went with him. When we arrived at the place we put on our snow-shoes and went to the meet. The hunt was unsuccessful: the wolves broke through the beat. I heard it from a distance and began walking in the forest, following a recent hare trace. The trace led me away far into a meadow. In the meadow I found him. He jumped up and disappeared. I returned. I returned through a forest of large trees. The snow was deep, my snow-shoes stuck, the branches entangled me. It became more and more deserted. I began asking myself: where am I? The snow has changed everything.

And I suddenly realized that I had lost my way. I am a long way from the house, and from the hunters, nothing can be heard. I was tired, all in a sweat. If I stopped, I should get frozen: if I walked on—my strength would give out. I called out. All was still. No one answered my call. I turned back. Wrong again. I looked round—only forest, no finding where is east or where west. I went back again. My feet were tired. I felt frightened, I stopped, and there came over me all the Arzamas and Moscow terror, but a hundred times increased. My heart thumped, my arms and legs trembled. Was death here? Death? I don't want him. Wherefore death? What is death? I wanted as before to question, to reproach God, but I suddenly felt then that I dared not, must not, that one can't call Him to account, that He has said what is needed, that I alone am at fault. And I began praying for His forgiveness, and became loathsome to myself.

The terror did not last long. I stood there, recovered and made for one particular direction, and soon came out. I was not far from the

edge of the forest. I came out into the edge and on to the road. My arms and legs kept on trembling as before and my heart thumping. But I felt joyous. I reached the hunters, and we returned home. I was cheerful, but knew that I had been granted some happiness, that I should think it out when I was left to myself. And so it happened. I was left alone in my little study and began to pray, asking for forgiveness and recalling my sins. They seemed few to me. But I recalled them, and they became loathsome to me.

From that time I began to read the Holy Scripture. The Bible was incomprehensible to me, fascinating; the Gospels elated me. But above all I read the Lives of the Saints, and that reading comforted me, presenting examples which seemed more and more possible of imitation. From that time my farming and my family affairs occupied me less and less. They even repelled me. It all seemed to me not it. How and what *it* was, I did not know, but what used to be my life ceased to be it. Once again I realized that through an attempt at buying an estate.

An estate was for sale on very advantageous terms not far from us. I went there. Everything was excellent, a bargain. Particularly advantageous was the fact that the peasants' lands consisted only of vegetable gardens. I perceived that they were bound for a mere trifle, for mere pasture, to work on the landlord's lands. And so it turned out. I appreciated all that, and I liked it all through old habit. But I went home, and on my way I met an old woman; asking her the way, I had a talk with her. She told me of her poverty. I arrived home, and when I began telling my wife of the advantages of the estate, I felt ashamed. I was disgusted. I said I could not buy the estate, because our advantage was founded on the poverty and sorrow of the people. I said it, and suddenly I was illuminated by the truth of what I said—mainly, the truth of this, that the peasants are as eager to live as we are, that they are men, brothers, sons of the Father, as it says in the Gospel. Suddenly what had been tearing at me for a long time was torn away, as though born. My wife was angry, and reproached me. But I felt happy.

That was the beginning of my madness. But my complete madness began later still, a month after that.

It started with this. I went to church, stood through the mass, and prayed fervently, and listened, and was elated. And suddenly I was given the wafer; then the people went to kiss the cross, and began pushing one another; then on coming out of church I saw beggars waiting. And suddenly it became clear to me that all that must not be. Not only must it not be, but that it was not; and if that was not, then there was no death and no fear, and there was no longer the former rending within me, and I was no longer afraid of anything.

And then the light fully illuminated me, and I became what I am. If all that was not, then first of all it is not in me. There and then, at the porch, I distributed all I had on me, thirty-five roubles, to the poor and walked home, talking to the people. . . .

* * *

VASILI ROZANOV

Vasili Vasilievich Rozanov (1856-1919) is one of the most astonishingly original figures in Russian literature. In his earlier years Rozanov was influenced by Dostoyevsky, but his most intimate ideas have nothing in common with those of that writer. His religion was one of life and procreation. His attitude to Christianity was ambiguous—ambivalent, composed of attraction and repulsion, the one as strong as the other. He was a convinced enemy of Reason, in practice as well as in theory. Rozanov's style was profoundly original, and as a literary influence his importance is very great.

Of the following extracts, the first two are taken from S. S. Koteliansky's translation of *Solitaria* by permission of Messrs. Wishart and Co., London, and Boni and Liveright, New York; the third, from *Fallen Leaves*, is taken from Prince D. S. Mirsky's *Contemporary Russian Literature* (Routledge), by the author's permission.

I. ON HIMSELF

SURPRISINGLY disgusting to me is my name. Always with such a strange feeling I sign my articles "V. Rozanov." Would it were "Rudnev," "Bugayev," anything. Or the common Russian "Ivanov." Once I walked in the street. I raised my head and read:

"Rozanov, German Bakers."

Why, so it must be; all bakers are "Rozanovs," and therefore all "Rozanovs" are bakers. What else could such fools (with such a stupid name) do? Worse than my name is only that of (professor) Kablukov: that is utterly disgraceful. Or Stitchkin (the critic of the *Russky Vestnik*): that is sheer infamy. But it is awfully unpleasant to bear such a name as mine. I think Bryussov (the poet) is always delighted with his name. Therefore

"The Works of V. Rozanov"

don't tempt me. It is even ridiculous.

"Poems by V. Rozanov"

can't possibly be thought of. Who will "read" such poems?

"What do you do, Rozanov?"

"I write poems."
"Fool. You'd better bake bread!"
Quite natural.

This unnaturally disgusting name is mine in addition to a miserable appearance. What a lot of times, as a schoolboy (when the boys went home) I stood before the large mirror in the school hall and "what a lot of tears I stealthily shed." A red face. An unpleasant complexion, shiny (not dry). The hair simply of fiery colour (and that in a schoolboy!), and it stands erect, but not in the noble, hedgehog fashion (a manly style), but in a rising wave, perfectly absurdly, I never saw anything like it. I would grease it, but it would not lie down. Then I would come home—and again look in the glass (a small, handy one): "Well, who could like such an ugly face?" I used to be seized with horror. Yet I was *remarkably* loved *by my chums,* and I always was the "ringleader" (against the authorities, teachers, particularly against the headmaster). In the glass, looking for beauty "with my protruding eyes," I naturally did not see my "expression," "smile," generally the *life of the face;* and I think that that very part in me was alive and after all made me remarkably loved by many (as I always absolutely loved in return).

But in my heart I thought:

"No, that's settled. Women *will never love me, not a single one.* What remains then? *To retire into* myself, *to live with myself, for myself* (not egotistically, but spiritually), *for the future.* Certainly, in a roundabout and 'foolish' way, my external unattractiveness was the cause of my self-fathoming."

Now I am even pleased that "Rozanov" is so disgusting. And I may add that from my childhood I loved ragged, worn, well-worn clothes. New clothes always squeezed me, embarrassed me, were even unbearable. And, in a word, as in the case of wine, the older the better. . . . The same I thought of boots, hats, and of "what takes the place of a jacket." And now it has all begun to please me.

Simply, I have no sense of form (Aristotle's *causa formalis*), I am a "clod," a "loofah." But that is because I am all spirit, and all subject: the subjective in me is indeed developed in me to an extent which I don't find and don't imagine in anyone else. "Well then?" . . . I am the least "born man," as though I still lay (as a clod) in my mother's womb (I love her endlessly, I mean my dead mother) and heard "paradisical melodies" (I always seem to be hearing music)—my peculiarity. "Well then, splendid, excellent!" . . . Why the deuce do I need an "attractive face" or "new clothes," when I *myself* (in myself, as the "clod") am infinitely attractive; and in my soul—I am

infinitely old, experienced, as though I were a thousand years old, and along with this I am young as a young baby. . . . Right! Righto! . . .

(Examining my coins)

II. ON HIMSELF AND MORALITY

I AM not yet such a scoundrel as to think of morality. A million years passed before my soul was let out into the world to enjoy it; and how can I suddenly say to her: "don't forget yourself, darling, but enjoy yourself in a moral fashion."

No, I say to her: "enjoy yourself, darling, have a good time, my lovely one, enjoy yourself, my precious, enjoy yourself in any way you please. And towards evening you will go to God."

For my life is my day, and it is my day, and not Socrates' or Spinoza's.

(In a railway carriage.)

III. ON HIS FRIEND SHPERK AND IMMORTALITY

TO SAY that Shperk *is now nowhere in this world,* is impossible. Maybe "the soul's immortality," in some Platonic sense, is an error; but when it comes to my friends, it cannot possibly be an error.

Not that "the soul of Shperk is immortal," but his little red beard cannot have died, his Byzov (he had a friend of that name) is waiting at the house-door, and he himself is in the tram on his way to my rooms in Pavlovski Street. All as it was. As for his soul, whether it is immortal, I neither know nor want to know.

All is immortal. Eternal and living. To the hole in his boot, which neither grows nor is mended since the time it was. This is better than "the immortality of the soul," which is dry and abstract.

I want to come "into the next life" with my pocket handkerchief. I won't have less.

* * *

LEO SHESTOV

"Leo Shestov" is the pseudonym of Leo Isaakovich Schwarzmann. Shestov, who was born in 1866 in Kiev, is a religious thinker of exceptional sincerity and courage, and a profound anti-rationalist. His masters are Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, not as dogmatists but as the destroyers of dogma. Nietzsche, Pascal, St. Paul, and Plotinus have also left a deep impression upon his mind. He is the master of an admirably clear and cutting style which is in the best tradition of Russian prose.

The following essay is taken from *All Things Are Possible,* trans-

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THE RUSSIAN SPIRIT

IT WILL easily be admitted that the distinguishing qualities of Russian literature, and of Russian art in general, are simplicity, truthfulness, and complete lack of rhetorical ornament. Whether it be to our credit or to our discredit is not for me to judge, but one thing seems certain: that our simplicity and truthfulness are due to our relatively scanty culture. Whilst European thinkers have for centuries been beating their brains over insoluble problems, we have only just begun to try our powers. We have no failures behind us. The fathers of the profoundest Russian writers were either landowners, dividing their time between extravagant amusement and State service, or peasants whose drudgery left them no time for idle curiosity. Such being the case, how can we know whether human knowledge has any limits? And if we don't know, it seems to us it is only because we haven't tried to find out. Other people's experience is not ours. We are not bound by their conclusions. Indeed, what do we know of the experience of others, save what we gather, very vaguely and fragmentarily and unreliably, from books? It is natural for us to believe the best, till the contrary is proved to us. Any attempt to deprive us of our beliefs meets with the most energetic resistance.

The most sceptical Russian hides a hope at the bottom of his soul. Hence our fearlessness of the truth, realistic truth which so stunned European critics. Realism was invented in the West, to counteract it were invented numberless other palliating theories whose business it was to soften down the disconsolate conclusions of Realism. There in Europe they have the *être suprême,* the *deus sive natura,* Hegel's absolute, Kant's postulates, English utilitarianism, progress, humanitarianism, hundreds of philosophic and sociological theories in which even extreme realists can so cleverly dish up what they call life, that life, or realism, ceases to be life or reality altogether.

The Westerner is self-reliant. He knows that if he doesn't help himself nobody will help him. So he directs all his thoughts to making the best of his opportunities. A limited time is granted him. If he can't get to the end of his song within the time-limit, the song must remain unsung. Fate will not give him one minute's grace for the unbeaten bars. Therefore as an experienced musician he adapts himself superbly. Not a second is wasted. The *tempo* must not drag for an instant, or he is lost. The *tempo* is everything, and exacts facility and quickness of movement. During a few short beats the artist must produce many notes, and produce them so as to leave the impression

that he was not hurried, that he had all the time in the world at his disposal. Moreover, each note must be complete, accomplished, have its fulness and its value. Native talent alone will not suffice for this. Experience is necessary, tradition, training, and inherited instinct. *Carpe diem*—the European has been living up to the motto for two thousand years. But if we Russians are convinced of anything, it is that we have time enough and to spare. To count days, much less hours and minutes—find me the Russian who could demean himself to such a *bourgeois* occupation. We look round, we stretch ourselves, we rub our eyes, we want first of all to decide what we shall do, and how we shall do it, before we can begin to live in earnest. We don't choose to decide anyhow, nor at second hand, from fragments of other people's information. It must be from our own experience, with our own brains, that we judge. We admit no traditions. In no literature has there been such a determined struggle with tradition as in ours. We have wanted to re-examine everything, re-state everything. I won't deny that our courage is drawn from our quite uncultured confidence in our own powers. Byelinsky, a half-baked undergraduate, deriving his knowledge of European philosophy at third hand, began a quarrel with the universe over the long-forgotten victims of Philip II and the Inquisition. In that quarrel is the sense and essence of all creative Russian literature. Dostoevsky, towards his end, raised the same storm and the same question over the little tear of an unfortunate child.

A Russian believes he can do anything, hence he is afraid of nothing. He paints life in the gloomiest colours—and were you to ask him: How can you accept such a life? how can you reconcile yourself with such horrors of reality as have been described by all your writers, from Poushkin to Tchekhov? he would answer in the words of Dmitri Karamazov: *I do not accept life*. This answer seems at first sight absurd. Since life is here, impossible not to accept it. But there is a sub-meaning in the reply, a lingering belief in the possibility of a final triumph over "evil." In the strength of this belief the Russian goes forth to meet his enemy—he does not hide from him. Our sectarians immolate themselves. Tolstoyans and votaries of the various sects that crop up so plentifully in Russia go in among the people, they go, God knows to what lengths, destroying their own lives and the lives of others. Writers do not lag behind sectarians. They, too, refuse to be prudent, to count the cost or the hours. Minutes, seconds, time-beats, all this is so insignificant as to be invisible to the naked eye. We wish to draw with a generous hand from fathomless eternity, and all that is limited we leave to European *bourgeoisie*. With few exceptions Russian writers really despise the pettiness of the West. Even those who have admired Europe most have done so because they failed

most completely to understand her. They did not want to understand her. That is why we have always taken over European ideas in such fantastic forms. Take the sixties for example. With its loud ideas of sobriety and modest outlook, it was a most drunken period. Those who awaited the New Messiah and the Second Advent read Darwin and dissected frogs. It is the same to-day. We allow ourselves the greatest luxury that man can dream of—sincerity, truthfulness—as if we were spiritual Crœsuses, as if we had plenty of everything, could afford to let everything be seen, ashamed of nothing. But even Crœsuses, the greatest sovereigns of the world, did not consider they had the right to tell the truth at all times. Even kings have to pretend—think of diplomacy. Whereas, we think we may speak the truth, and the truth only, that any lie which obscures our true substance is a crime; since our true substance is the world's finest treasure, its finest reality. . . . Tell this to a European, and it will seem a joke to him, even if he can grasp it at all. A European uses all his powers of intellect and talent, all his knowledge and his art for the purpose of concealing his real self and all that really affects him: for that the natural is ugly and repulsive, no one in Europe will dispute for a moment. Not only the fine arts, but science and philosophy in Europe tell lies instinctively, by lying they justify their existence. First and last, a European student presents you with a finished theory. Well, and what does all the "finish" and the completeness signify? It merely means that none of our western neighbours will end his speech before the last reassuring word is said; he will never let nature have the last word; so he rounds off his synthesis. With him, ornament and rhetoric is a *sine qua non* of creative utterance, the only remedy against all ills. In philosophy reigns theodicy, in science, the law of sequence. Even Kant could not avoid declamation, even with him the last word is "moral necessity." Thus there lies before us the choice between the artistic and accomplished lie of old, cultured Europe, a lie which is the outcome of a thousand years of hard and bitter effort, and the artless, sincere simplicity of young, uncultured Russia.

They are nearer the end, we are nearer the beginning. And which is nearer the truth? And can there be a question of voluntary, free choice? Probably neither the old age of Europe nor the youth of Russia can give us the truth we seek. But does such a thing as ultimate truth exist? Is not the very conception of truth, the very assumption of the possibility of truth, merely an outcome of our limited experience, a fruit of limitation? We decide *a priori* that one thing must be possible, another impossible, and from our arbitrary assumptions we proceed to deduce the body of truth. Each one judges in his own way, according to his powers and the conditions of his existence. The timid, scared man worries after *order,* that will give

him a day of peace and quiet, youth dreams of beauty and brilliance, old age doesn't want to think of anything, having lost the faculty for hope. And so it goes on, *ad infinitum*. And this is called truth, truths! Every man thinks that his own experience covers the whole range of life. And, therefore, the only men who turn out to be at all in the right are empiricists and positivists. There can be no question of truth once we tear ourselves away from the actual conditions of life.

Our confident truthfulness, like European rhetoric, turns out to be "beyond truth and falsehood." The young East and the old West alike suffer from the restrictions imposed by truth—but the former ignores the restrictions, whilst the latter adapts itself to them. After all, it comes to pretty much the same in the end. Is not clever rhetoric as delightful as truthfulness? Each is equally *life*. Only we find unendurable a rhetoric which poses as truth, and a truthfulness which would appear cultured. Such a masquerade would try to make us believe that truth, which is only *limitedness*, has a real objective existence. Which is offensive. Until the contrary is proved, we need to think that only one assertion has or can have any objective reality: *that nothing on earth is impossible*. Every time somebody wants to force us to admit that there are other, more limited and limiting truths, we must resist with every means we can lay hands on. We do not hesitate even to make use of morality and logic, both of which we have abused so often. But why not use them!

When a man is at his last resources he does not care what weapons he picks up.

* * *

MAXIM GORKY

"Maxim Gorky" is the pseudonym of Alexey Maximovich Peshkov, who was born in Astrakhan in 1869. Gorky acquired a sudden and universal celebrity on account of his early tales and plays from the life of tramps and smugglers. His later reputation, founded on his autobiographical books (*Childhood*, etc.) and on his reminiscences (including the remarkable recollections of Tolstoy) is less sensational, but probably more lasting. *Fragments from My Diary* (1924), from which the following extract is taken, is a collection of odds and ends from Gorky's recollections and observations of men.

The first extract is reprinted by permission of the publishers of *Fragments from My Diary*, Messrs. Philip Allan and Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Robert M. McBride and Co. The second has been translated by Mr. S. S. Koteliansky from Gorky's preface to the first catalogue of the great publishing house founded by him under the auspices of the Bolshevik Government. It is reprinted here by the translator's permission.

I. MAN'S BEHAVIOUR WHEN ALONE

TO-DAY while I was watching a fair little lady in cream-coloured stockings, with the immature features of a child, who stood on the Troitzki bridge, holding to the balustrade with her grey-gloved hands as though preparing to jump into the Neva, I saw her stick out a sharp, pink little tongue at the moon.

The old man in the moon, the sly fox of the skies, was stealthily making his way through a cloud of dirty smoke. He was very large and his cheeks were crimson as though he had had too much to drink. The young lady was teasing him very earnestly and even revengefully —so it seemed to me at least.

She recalled to my mind the memory of certain "peculiarities" which had puzzled me for a long time. Whenever I watch how a man behaves when he is alone, I always conclude that he is "insane"—I can find no other word for it.

I first noticed this when I was still a boy: a clown named Rondale, an Englishman, who was walking along the dark and deserted passages of a circus, took off his top hat to a mirror and bowed respectfully to his own reflection. There was no one in the passage but himself. I was sitting on a cistern over his head and so was invisible to him, and had thrust out my head just at the moment when he made his respectful bow. This action of the clown plunged me into dark and unpleasant speculations. He was a clown, and what is more, an Englishman, whose profession—or art—lay in his eccentricity.

Then I noticed a neighbour, A. Tchekoff, sitting in his garden, try unsuccessfully to catch a sunbeam with his hat and to place both on his head. I could see that his failure annoyed the sunbeam hunter; his face grew redder and redder, and he ended by slapping his hat on his knee, putting it on his head with a quick movement, and impatiently pushing his dog away. Then, half-closing his eyes and looking stealthily at the sky, he stalked towards the house. Seeing me in the porch, he smiled and said,

"Good morning. Have you read Belmont's verses, 'The sun smells of grass'? Silly, isn't it? In Russia it smells of Kazan soap and here—of Tartar sweat."

It was Tchekoff, too, who tried conscientiously to poke a thick red pencil into the neck of a small medicine-bottle, thereby breaking a certain law of physics as well as the bottle. He persisted with the quiet obstinacy of a scientist making an experiment.

Leo Tolstoy once said to a lizard in a low whisper: "Are you happy, eh?"

The lizard was warming itself on a stone among the shrubs that

grew on the road to Dulber, while he stood watching it, his hands thrust inside his leather belt. Then cautiously looking round, the great man confided to the lizard: "As for me, I'm not!"

Professor Tikhvinsky, the chemist, sitting in my dining-room, addressed his own reflection in the copper tea-tray: "Well, old boy, how is life?"

The image made no reply; so Tikhvinsky sighed deeply and began carefully rubbing it off with his palm, puckering his brows and twitching his nose, which resembled the trunk of an embryo elephant.

I was told that some one once found N. S. Leskoff occupying himself by sitting at the table and lifting a tuft of cotton-wool into the air, then letting it fall into a china bowl and stooping over it, listening, evidently expecting that the wool would produce a sound as it fell on the china.

The priest F. Vladimirsky once placed a boot in front of him, and said to it impressively: "Now then—go!" Then, "Ah, you can't?" Then, with dignity and conviction he added: "You see! You can't go anywhere without me!"

"What are you doing, Father?" I asked, entering the room at this moment.

He looked at me attentively and explained: "It's this boot. It's all worn down at the heel. Nowadays they make such poor boots!"

I have often noticed how people laugh and cry when they are by themselves. A writer, a perfectly sober man who never indulged in drink, used to cry when he was alone, and whistle the old hurdy-gurdy tune, "As I come out alone on the road!" He whistled badly, like a woman, and his lips trembled: tears rolled slowly out of his eyes, and hid in his dark whiskers and beard. Once he cried in the room of an hotel, standing with his back to the window, spreading out his arms and going through the movements of swimming; but this was not for the sake of exercise, for the movements were slow and neither powerful nor rhythmical.

This, however, is not so queer: laughter and tears are the expressions of sane and natural states of mind; they do not puzzle one. Neither do the solitary nocturnal prayers of people in the fields, in the woods, in the plains, and on the sea.

My neighbour in Kniagi Dvör, a landowner in the Vörönoj district, came into my room one night by mistake, half-undressed, but perfectly sober. I lay still in bed, having already put out the light. The room was filled with moonlight and through a hole in the hangings I could see his dry face with its curious smile. He was carrying on a low dialogue with himself.

"Who's there?"

"It is I."

"This is not your room."

"Oh, I beg your pardon!"

"Please. . ."

He stopped speaking, looked round the room, admired his whiskers in the mirror, and began singing softly:

"I got in the wrong place, place . . .
How did I do this, this, this?"

After this, instead of leaving the room, he took up a book, placed it face downwards on the table, and looking out on the street, said loudly, as though reproaching somebody:

"It's as light as day now—and in the daytime it was dark and horrid. A fine arrangement, eh? . . ."

Then he went out on tip-toe, balancing himself with his arms outstretched, and closed the door carefully and noiselessly behind him.

To see a child trying to remove a picture from the page of a book with its fingers is not very unusual; but to see a scientist, a professor, trying to do it and turning round and listening as though afraid of being caught in the act, is strange indeed.

The professor in question evidently was convinced that the printed drawing could be removed from the paper and hidden in the pocket of his waistcoat. Once or twice he thought he had succeeded. He took up something from the page and, lifting it between two fingers like a coin, tried to slip it into his pocket; but, then, looking at his fingers, he frowned, held the picture up to the light, and again started to rub the printed impression persistently. Finally, seeing that this had no result, he threw the book aside and strode out of the room, stamping angrily. I examined the book very carefully. It was a technical work in German, illustrated with reproductions of different electric motors and their parts. There was not a single picture that was glued to the page, and it is obvious that anything printed cannot be removed from a page and slipped into the pocket! Probably the professor knew this too, although he was not a technician, but a professor of humanitarian sciences.

Women often talk to themselves while playing a game of patience or when they are busy at their toilet, but one day for five whole minutes I watched a well-educated woman eating sweets in solitude and addressing each of the candies, which she held up in the air with a small pair of pincers:

"Ah, I'll eat you up!" Then she would eat it up and ask, "Whom?"

"Well, didn't I?"

Then, again; "I'll eat you up!"

"Didn't I?"

She was sitting at the time in an armchair at the window, at five o'clock on a summer's evening, and from the street the muffled noise of the big town filled the room. The face of the woman was serious,

her greyish eyes were fixed earnestly on the box of sweets in her lap. . . .

In the corridor of a theatre I once saw a pretty, dark-haired woman, who had arrived late for the performance, arranging her hair in front of a mirror and remarking to some one in a stern and rather loud voice:

"And still—one has to die?"

There was no one in the corridor except me, who had also been late in coming, but she did not notice me, and even if she had I hope she would not have thought of putting such an unseemly question to me!

Yes, many people exhibit "peculiarities" of this nature when they are alone. Here is another instance:

Alexander Blok, standing on the staircase of a public library, was writing something in pencil on the margin of a book, when suddenly, pressing close to the balustrade, he respectfully made way for some one to pass by. I was watching him closely, but saw no one pass him. . . . I was standing on the landing at the top of the staircase, and when Blok's eyes, which wore a smiling expression, in following the *some one* who had passed him, met my gaze—probably one of amazement—he dropped the pencil, stooped to pick it up, and asked:

"Am I late?"

II. ON LITERATURE

IS IT necessary to speak of the necessity of a serious study of literature, or at least of a wide acquaintance with it? Literature is the heart of the world, winged with all its joys and sorrows, with all the dreams and hopes of men, with their despair and wrath, with their reverence before the beauty of nature, their fears in face of her mysteries. This heart throbs violently and eternally with the thirst of self-knowledge, as though in it all those substances and forces of nature that have created the human personality as the highest expression of their complexity and wisdom aspired to clarify the meaning and aim of life.

Literature may also be called the all-seeing eye of the world, whose glance penetrates into the deepest recesses of the human spirit. A book —so simple a thing and so familiar—is, essentially, one of the great and mysterious wonders of the world. Some one unknown to us, sometimes speaking an incomprehensible language, hundreds of miles away, has drawn on paper various combinations of a score or so of signs, which we call letters, and when we look at them, we strangers, remote from the creator of the book, mysteriously perceive the meaning of all the words, the ideas, the feelings, the images; we admire the description of the scenes of nature, take delight in the beautiful rhythm of speech, the music of the words. Moved to tears, angry, dreaming, sometimes

laughing over the motley printed sheets, we grasp the life of the spirit, akin or foreign to ourselves. The book is, perhaps, the most complicated and mightiest of all the miracles created by man on his path to the happiness and power of the future.

There is no one universal literature, for there is yet no language common to all, but all literary creation, in prose and poetry, is saturated with the unity of feelings, thoughts, ideals shared by all men, with the unity of man's sacred aspiration towards the joy of the freedom of the spirit, with the unity of man's disgust at the miseries of life, the unity of his hopes of the possibility of higher forms of life, and with the universal thirst for something indefinable in word or thought, hardly to be grasped by feeling, that mysterious something to which we give the pale name of beauty, and which comes to an ever brighter and more joyous flower in the world, in our own hearts.

Whatever may be the inward differences of nations, races, individualities, however distinct may be the external forms of states, religious conceptions, and customs, however irreconcilable the conflict of classes —over all these differences, created by ourselves through centuries, hovers the dark and menacing spectre of the universal consciousness of the tragic quality of life and the poignant sense of the loneliness of man in the world.

Rising from the mystery of birth, we plunge into the mystery of death. Together with our planet we have been thrown into incomprehensible space. We call it the Universe, but we have no precise conception of it, and our loneliness in it has such an ironical perfection that we have nothing with which to compare it.

The loneliness of man in the Universe and on the earth, which is to many "a desert, alas! not unpeopled"—on earth amid the most tormenting contradiction of desires and possibilities—is realized only by few. But the faint feeling of it is implanted in the instinct of nearly every man like a noxious weed, and it often poisons the lives of men who appear to be perfectly immune from that murderous nostalgia which is the same for all ages and peoples, which tormented equally Byron the Englishman, Leopardi the Italian, the writer of *Ecclesiastes,* and Lao-Tse, the great sage of Asia.

This anguish that arises from the dim sense of the precariousness and tragedy of life is common to great and small, to every one who has the courage to look at life with open eyes. And if a time is to come when men will have overcome this anguish and stifled in themselves the consciousness of tragedy and loneliness, they will achieve that victory only by the way of spiritual creation, only by the combined efforts of literature and science.

Besides its envelope of air and light all our earth is surrounded with a sphere of spiritual creativeness, with the multifarious rainbow emanation of our energy, out of which is woven, forged, or moulded all that

is immortally beautiful; out of which are created the mightiest ideas and the enchanting complexity of our machines, the amazing temples and tunnels that pierce the rock of great mountains, books, pictures, poems, millions of tons of iron flung as bridges across wide rivers, suspended with such miraculous lightness in the air—all the stern and lovely, all the mighty and tender poetry of our life.

By the victory of the mind and will over the elements of nature and the animal in man, striking out ever brighter sparks of hope from the iron wall of the unknown, we men can speak with legitimate joy of the planetary significance of the great efforts of our spirit, most resplendently and powerfully expressed in literary and scientific creation.

The great virtue of literature is that by deepening our consciousness, by widening our perception of life, by giving shape to our feelings, it speaks to us as with a voice saying: All ideals and acts, all the world of the spirit is created out of the blood and nerves of men. It tells us that Hen-Toy, the Chinaman, is as agonizingly unsatisfied with the love of woman as Don Juan, the Spaniard; that the Abyssinian sings the same songs of the sorrows and joys of love as the Frenchman; that there is an equal pathos in the love of a Japanese Geisha and Manon Lescaut; that man's longing to find in woman the other half of his soul has burned and burns with an equal flame men of all lands, all times.

A murderer in Asia is as loathsome as in Europe; the Russian miser Plushkin is as pitiable as the French Grandet; the Tartufes of all countries are alike; misanthropes are equally miserable everywhere, and everywhere every one is equally charmed by the touching image of Don Quixote, the Knight of the Spirit. And after all, all men, in all languages, always speak of the same things, of themselves and their fate. Men of brute instincts are everywhere alike, the world of the intellect alone is infinitely varied.

With a clearness irresistibly convincing, fine literature gives us all these innumerable likenesses and infinite varieties—literature, the pulsing mirror of life, reflecting with quiet sadness or with anger, with the kindly laugh of a Dickens or the frightful grimace of Dostoevsky, all the complications of our spiritual life, the whole world of our desires, the bottomless stagnant pools of banality and folly, our heroism and cowardice in the face of destiny, the courage of love and the strength of hatred, all the nastiness of our hypocrisy and the shameful abundance of lies, the disgusting stagnation of our minds and our endless agonies, our thrilling hopes and sacred dreams—all by which the world lives, all that quivers in the hearts of men. Watching man with the eyes of a sensitive friend, or with the stern glance of a judge, sympathizing with him, laughing at him, admiring his courage, cursing his nullity —literature rises above life, and, together with science, lights up for

men the paths to the achievement of their goals, to the development of what is good in them.

At times enchanted with the beautiful aloofness of science, literature may become infatuated with a dogma, and then we see Emile Zola viewing man only as a "belly," constructed "with charming coarseness," and we also see how the cold despair of Du Bois Reymond infects so great an artist as Gustave Flaubert.

It is obvious that literature cannot be completely free from what Turgeniev called "the pressure of time"; it is natural, for "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." And it may be that the evil of the day poisons more often than it should the sacred spirit of beauty, and our search for its "inspirations and prayers"; these inspirations and prayers are poisoned by the venomous dust of the day. But "the beautiful is the rare," as Edmond Goncourt justly said, and we most certainly often consider lacking in beauty and insignificant habitual things—those habitual things which, as they recede into the past, acquire for our descendants all the marks and qualities of true, unfading beauty. Does not the austere life of ancient Greece appear to us beautiful? Does not the bloody, stormy, and creative epoch of the Renaissance with all its "habitual" cruelty enrapture us? It is more than probable that the great days of the social catastrophe we are going through now will arouse the ecstasy, awe, and creativeness of the generations that will come after us.

Nor let us forget that though Balzac's *Poor Relations,* Gogol's *Dead Souls, The Pickwick Papers,* are essentially books that describe conditions of actual life, there is hidden in them a great and imperishable lesson which the best university cannot provide, and which an average man will not have learnt so exactly or so clearly after fifty years of hard-working life.

The habitual is not always banal, for it is habitual for man to be consumed in the hell fire of his vocation, and this self-consumption is always beautiful and necessary, as it is instructive for those who timidly smoulder all their life long, without blazing up in the bright flame that destroys the man and illuminates the mysteries of his spirit.

Human errors are not so characteristic of the art of the word and image; more characteristic is its longing to raise man above the external conditions of existence, to free him from the fetters of the degrading actuality, to show him to himself not as the slave, but as the lord of circumstance, the free creator of life, and in this sense literature is ever revolutionary.

By the mighty effort of genius rising above all circumstances of actuality, saturated with the spirit of humanity, kindling its hatred from the excess of passionate love, fine literature, prose and poetry, is our great vindication, and not our condemnation. It knows that there are no guilty—although everything is in man, everything is from man.

The cruel contradictions of life that arouse the enmity and hatred of nations, classes, individuals, are to literature only an inveterate error, and she believes that the ennobled will of men can and must destroy all errors, all that which, arresting the free development of the spirit, delivers man into the power of animal instincts.

When you look closely into the mighty stream of creative energy embodied in the word and image, you feel and believe that the great purpose of this stream is to wash away for ever all the differences between races, nations, classes, and, by freeing men from the hard burden of the struggle with each other, to direct all their forces to the struggle with the mysterious forces of nature. And it seems that then the art of the word and image is and will be the religion of all mankind —a religion that absorbs everything that is written in the sacred writings of ancient India, in the Zend-Avesta, in the Gospels and Koran.

Literature, the living and imaged history of the exploits and errors, of the excellences and failures of our ancestors, possessing the mighty power of influencing the organization of thought, of refining the crudity of the instincts, educating the will, must finally fulfil her planetary *rôle* —the *rôle* of the power which most firmly and most intimately unites the peoples by the consciousness of their sufferings and longings, by the consciousness of the community of their desire for the happiness of a life that is beautiful and free.

The domain of literary creation is the International of the spirit, and in our day, when the idea of the brotherhood of the peoples, of the social International, is visibly being transformed into reality, into necessity, we are bound to strain every effort in order that the assimilation of the salutary idea of universal brotherhood should be carried on with the utmost speed, and penetrate into the depths of the mind and will of the masses.

The wider his knowledge, the more perfect is man; the keener and more eager man's interest in his fellow-men, the quicker will be accomplished the process of fusion of the good creative elements into one united power, the quicker we shall pass through our stations of the cross to the universal festival of mutual understanding, respect, brotherhood—to our own glory.

After the criminal and accursed slaughter ignominiously called forth by men intoxicated with their passionate worship of the fat Yellow Devil of gold, after the bloody tempest of malice and hatred, nothing could be more opportune than to present the wide picture of spiritual creation. At the festival of the brute and the beast let men remember all that is truly human that the ages have taught us, that genius and talent have taught the world.

POLAND

Introductory Note

THE troubled history of Poland has left an indelible mark upon her literature. After the Renaissance in the sixteenth century and a period of classicism at the close of the eighteenth, Polish literature reached its highest peak at the moment when Poland lost her independence. After this it could not develop on its native soil and for half a century Paris became the centre of Polish letters. Important books were produced there, thus preserving the literary unity of a country which had been ruthlessly expunged from the map of Europe. The last decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth saw a new renaissance of Polish literature, particularly in the direction of the novel.

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IGNACY MATUSZEWSKI

IGNACY MATUSZEWSKI (1858-1919) was a leading literary critic and essayist of deep culture. He was an authority on the poetry of Slowacki; on Sienkiewicz, Wyspianski, and Żeromski; and on the relations between Polish poetry and foreign literatures. It was owing to his essays that the new literary ideas and fashions coming from France and England became popular with Polish readers. He combined lucidity and judgment in a remarkable fashion, and his wide reading enabled him to display in his philosophical essays a profound knowledge of foreign literatures.

The following essay from *Creation and Creators* has been specially translated for this collection by J. Krzyżanowski, by permission of Dr. Jozef Muszkowski, editor of Matuszewski's collected works.

THE QUIXOTIC SPIRIT

THE spirit of Don Quixote appears at a certain stage of every idea, every reform, every discovery or improvement, every programme and every fight for truth or justice. There is always a need for somebody to point the way, to make mistakes, to become a target for mockery or even blows, to fight against the windmills of prejudice, against the sheep of habit, against ill-will, indifference, and the thoughtless raillery of the masses.

It manifests itself over and over again in connexion with new ideas, and with old ones which, not yet fully realized, never would be unless there were a Quixote to champion them. Not only does man accustom himself very reluctantly to the newer conquests of thought and spirit, but he very easily divests himself as well of the older conquests, despite the fact that—or because—they are complete. For who does not know that he should be good, indulgent, just, and kind to the lowly and weak, and full of dignity in his relations with those of high degree? Yet who takes the trouble to follow these beatitudes?

Or who does not appreciate the necessity for war against evil, hypocrisy, untruth, egoism, exploitation, and injustice?—and yet, who would risk the beginning of such a quarrel with the knowledge that for the most part he would be alone and forlorn, if not actually betrayed by those upon whose aid he had most firmly relied?

That man who refuses to concern himself with means and ends of a practical nature at the start of an unequal fight is called by the world a Don Quixote. And rightly so. However, it is as well to remember that this title given in contempt is really honourable.

For Don Quixote is not only a dreamer beaten and mocked by reality, but he is also a symbol of the noblest endeavours and aspirations, continually crushed by the everyday course of life, yet necessary for the spiritual advancement of mankind.

A man who never in his lifetime fought against windmills, never even imagined himself doing so, would accomplish great things for his own benefit, but surely he would contribute not a tittle to the happiness of others: he would not risk his enterprises for the commonweal or raise by one degree the spiritual temperature of his age.

It is true that a community made up solely of Don Quixotes would starve; but a community of Robinson Crusoes would, by its very nature, immerse itself completely in practical materialism.

Of Robinson Crusoe let us not forget that he was isolated upon a desert island: that necessity alone developed in him those spiritual forces which awaken our astonishment. Formerly he had been a commonplace adventurer. Afterwards he became a solid citizen of his country. Had his shipwreck never taken place he would perhaps have been an equally solid coffee-planter or maybe a trafficker in slaves—the more likely because slavery was not considered a curse in those days.

But with Don Quixote it is quite otherwise. Whilst Crusoe only accommodated himself to conditions and circumstances with no wish to reach higher or further, Quixote in his heart and imagination constantly ran beyond these boundaries. No matter in what other place or period he was born Quixote would not appear ridiculous, for he

would always find it possible to apply practically the great treasures of his noble enthusiasm. But placed by fortune in the wrong setting, the poor dreamer piled folly upon folly.

His failures, however, are in action, not in the mind. Don Quixote is always true to himself. Whether he is freeing the galley slaves or whether he is destroying Father Peter's marionettes he is conscious of fighting on the side of justice, of defending the unhappy and oppressed. The subjective quality of his mind must always be kept in memory when one is estimating the social value of the quixotic type.

Robinson Crusoe's type is necessary for the material development of nations. But there is also an inexorable necessity for such men as Don Quixote to act as a kind of yeast raising nations above the grosser qualities of selfishness and materialism.

Enthusiasm, romanticism, and reverie are like strong narcotics—in excessive doses they stun and weaken the nerves, if used properly they vitalize and strengthen the organism, individual and social.

The administration of these medicines is of course inevitable. And no abuse demands that they should be removed from the social medicine-chest and contemptuously thrown out of the window.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Introductory Note

JOHN HUS, the reformer, who was for a time rector of Prague University is generally considered to be the father of Czech literature though its earliest records date back to the thirteenth century. There is no parallel among other Slavs to the richness and variety of Czech medieval literature. The favourable period of the Bohemian reformation ended abruptly in the disasters of the Thirty Years' War which marks a new departure in the political, social, and literary life of the country. J. A. Comenius (Komensky), "the Teacher of Nations," died in exile and his famous *Labyrinth of the World* was long a prohibited book in Bohemia. However, the powerful tradition of the classic period, based mainly on the "heretic" Bible of Kralice, which was mercilessly destroyed in Bohemia but treasured in Slovakia, reasserted itself in the romantic period. The literary renaissance that followed produced remarkable lyric poetry culminating in the mystic rhapsodies of Otokar Březina. In the realm of the literary essay there is a whole cohort of distinguished writers. F. X. Šalda, a master of language, and the learned Arne Novák are the foremost critics in the present generation.

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JAN NERUDA

JAN NERUDA was born 1834 at Malá Strana, Prague. An original figure in the world of Czech letters, he produced many poetic works of striking merit and intense vigour though he was chiefly admired for his realistic stories and essays. He was an enthusiastic student of English literature and he might be compared to Dickens for the humanity and humour that inform his sketches of the characters from Prague's lower classes. He was the chief critic for literature, drama, and art and for *Národní Listy*, and everything he wrote has obtained a high place in Czech literature. As miscellaneous writer he was extremely prolific and versatile and may be regarded as the founder of the modern Czech humorous essay. A teasing irony is characteristic of his habit of mind. He died in Prague in 1891.

The following essay from *Little Chats* has been specially translated for this collection by F. P. Casey.

ARE THE ANGELS WOMEN?

I DO not know if her name is really Mina or whether she only signs herself Mina, but in short "Mina" has written me a letter. It would appear that I have to solve "this puzzling question, hitherto solved by none: of what sex are the angels?" It is said that I know everything and therefore also this, so Mina flatters me.

Very well then, I will now solve this question. In any event it is certain that throughout the whole year there is never so much talk about angels as there is just now during Shrovetide, and the problem is therefore a seasonable one. And I had better admit at once that as to the answer I entirely agree with Miss Mina, who says "Perhaps in all languages angels are of the male sex, and yet—could you imagine an angel in the muscular stature of a man? All honour to manly vigour, but my opinion is that the concept *angel* can be incarnated only in the charming and delicate frame of a woman." Yes, angels *are* of the female sex!

Obviously in the words of Miss Mina speaks the unmistakable voice of Nature, the infallible feeling of kinship. I do not doubt in the least that this voice and this feeling will be echoed in the minds and hearts of all the womenfolk in the world. And that is a matter of very great importance. In the same way it is a point of equal importance that of such voice or feeling there is not a trace to be found in the minds or hearts of us menfolk. I for example have never considered myself as an angelic being—upon my honour, no!—and likewise I have never expected when I approached any woman that "angel" should break from her lips. On the other hand I have myself very frequently upon catching sight of a woman sighed "A regular angel!" The same thing surely happens to other men. There are of course exceptions, men who call themselves—yes, even sign themselves—"Angel," as in Prague a certain painter, a certain tailor, a certain druggist, a certain greengrocer; but for all that we believe not a scrap in their angelic quality. Nor do they believe in it themselves.

It is precisely the case that upon catching sight of a woman we menfolk quite involuntarily think of angels.

> Woodland chapel standing on a pleasant hillock high,
> Ladies come from thee, like angels from the sky,

is sung by the most simple peasant. Let us "educated" townspeople place ourselves, when the morning class is over, at a point near two schools, a boys' school and a girls'—what do we say as the boys rush out? "What a set!" And what when the little girls come out? "Angels, little angels!" as our poet Kollár sings in one of his sonnets. Has it

not happened to perhaps every one of us "grown ups" that at one time or another we have knelt before some feminine figure exactly as though before an angel, embracing her feet as though in terror lest she should fly away from us? Surely then we have involuntarily called to mind those pictures, in which angels are depicted with wings of a dove as symbols of goodness and innocence, or of a peacock as a sign that the angels, like women, are fond of adorning and beautifying themselves.

There are of course people who absolutely deny to women any angelic qualities. Women, they allege, are merely human beings like ourselves or rather inferior to us—so they say. Well, certainly they are a little like ourselves. They possess human forms, human countenances, and so on. But does not every child know that whenever angels intervene in human affairs they assume a human form and likeness? The deuce only knows. I trust I shall prove irrefutably, beyond all fear of contradiction, that the angels according to sex are female, inasmuch as women again are angels—no, I can't make a distinction. And there are older and wiser and more learned people who make no invidious distinctions either.

Just one further proof. F. Rückert tells, in the poem "The Appearance of the Angel-reapers," that the girls of the village danced by the light of the moon, and, on account of the heat, in that costume which Eve affected before the introduction of the fig-leaf fashion. They said—no one would come anyhow. Just then some one appeared on the scene—the old parish priest. Off with the girls helter-skelter for their skirts, but the youngest—these youngest ones are always the slyest—held them back. "Why, in our skirts he will recognize us. Let us keep on dancing and not bother about him." And the old priest saw them, returned home presently, and lying down on his bed he thank God that "angel-reapers" had appeared to him, which is the sign of a good harvest. Thus did a man, old and experienced, a competent judge of men and angels—a truly instructive story.

Let us, however, proceed a little farther. What will the reader think if he sees it demonstrated that the devil too, an ex-angel, is a woman: would not that be conclusive evidence of the femininity of the angels? I do not produce here the evidence to support it, but merely call the reader's attention to something in passing, so let him judge for himself accordingly.

Is it ever said of men that they are "fallen angels"?

Is it not written in II *Corinthians*, XI, 14 that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light? And does not this imply that it does not cost Satan the least labour? And thus did not the devil, every time he sought to lead some holy man astray, assume again his form of long ago, that of a woman?

In this respect does not that infallible voice of Nature alluded to above, the infallible sense of kinship—does it not here again make

itself heard and felt in the minds and hearts of our womenfolk? Will not each of them answer when we say "you are an angel?" "Yes, but a 'black angel,' 'with horns,'" and so on?

Is there anyone else in the world who plays the very devil with a man as a woman does?

Do we think, we men, when we say "devilkin, imp, sprite, elf," and the like of anyone else than a woman?

When a man has dealings with the devil doesn't the latter seize him in the end? And when a man has dealings with a woman doesn't she also take possession of him?

Doesn't the weighty comparison force itself upon us when we allow ourselves to be instructed by our old-time national proverbs, "Who is most handsome is most beloved of the devil," again "The devil has plenty of sugar with which to sweeten sin," yet again "Let the devil manage, he is an obstinate fellow," and finally "The devil will take care of his own"? But is it not striking that it is equally said "Serve God and don't vex the devil" and "Serve God and don't vex a woman"?

Do not the women drive most human victims into the devil's net, and doesn't the grateful devil assist them in turn, as in the case of the woman in a certain Bohemian village who on St. Thomas's eve kept on spinning past ten o'clock in the evening and thus vexed the saint, whereupon the devil gave her advice how to get the better of the man of God?

Does not the devil even in the very church of God often lead the minds of men astray and so to slackness in devotions? And do not women do likewise on such occasions?

Is not the devil depicted in Poland in German attire? Black with us? Red in Italy? White among the Moors? And does not this show his woman's nature in desiring thus to vary his costume?

Does not the devil if he gets married always choose an old woman, and would he do that if he were a man?

And so on, and so on. . . .

But let us now proceed yet farther; the reader perhaps already exclaims, "These are after all merely probabilities, negative proofs, I want a positive proof." Very well, now for positive proofs that angels are of the female sex.

Everybody knows that there are "guardian angels," and that these angels take care of children. Now I ask you, whom does one choose as a nurse for children, a man or a woman?

The reader is taken aback. But the reader being a person of vast erudition after a brief moment comes to himself and says "Hum—in the East Indies, whence came to us the elements of all culture, there are also men nurses. Perhaps now that hoary, old-established institution, 'guardian angels,' also came to us from India ——"

Very well, then—the reader will not be put out. In an essay some time ago I referred to a popular song—

> Who dances much and loves it well,
> For music he does pay.
> Then holy angels once will bear
> His soul to heaven away.

I entreat you now—will they not surely be women?

The reader is once more taken aback. Good. I will administer the knockout. That the angels are really women I shall furnish him with final proof—proof that will overwhelm him. I now play a card, a trump which no one in the universe can beat, a trump which will be a triumph.

In Holy Writ it is recorded, *St. Luke,* II, 13—*Et subito facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae*—

An angel, joined by a host of warriors!

* * *

KAREL ČAPEK

Karel Čapek, Ph.D., was born in 1890 at Malé Svatoňovice under the Giant Mountains in North Bohemia. He is best known abroad as a bold and stimulating dramatist and inventor of the "Robots." The author of cleverly constructed plays, *The Freebooter*, *R. U. R.*, *The Makropulos Affair*, and joint-author of daring philosophical revues, *The Life of the Insects* and *Adam the Creator*, he has won also much distinction as writer of fantastic fiction and witty essays. His consummate mastery in the drawing of character is best revealed in his *Unpleasant Stories*, perhaps the finest collection of short stories in the Czech language. The most popular of his essays are his gently satirical *Letters from England*, a series of travelling sketches contributed to his paper *Lidové Noviny* for which he writes regularly. An optimistic "pragmatist" philosophy and the Chestertonian mirth of his essays strangely contrasts with the deep pessimism underlying his dramas and with the gloomy atmosphere of his best stories.

The following essay from *Of Intimate Things* has been specially translated for this collection by Dora Round by the author's permission.

CATS

WILL anyone explain to me why a cat gets so strangely excited if you whistle to her very shrill and high? I have tried it with English, Italian, and German cats; there is no geographical distinction: when the cat hears your whistling (especially if you whistle "Night of stars and night of love" as high as you can), she begins to rub against

you fascinated, jumps on to your knee, sniffs at your lips in surprise, and finally in rapturous excitement she begins to bite passionately at your mouth and nose with an expression disfigured by voluptuousness; on which you of course stop, and she begins to purr hoarsely and energetically like a small motor. I have thought about it time and again, and I don't know to this day from what age-old instinct cats adore whistling; I do not believe that at any time in the primeval era there was an age when male cats whistled shrilly instead of yowling in metallic and strident alto as they do to-day. Perhaps in distant and savage times there lived some cat gods who used to speak to their cat believers by means of magical whistling; but this is a mere hypothesis, and the above-mentioned fascination of music is one of the riddles of the cat soul.

Man thinks that he knows cats just as he thinks he knows people. A cat is a thing which sleeps curled up in the armchair, sometimes prowls about its cat-affairs, sometimes knocks over the ash-tray, and spends the greater part of its life in passionate pursuit of warmth. But the secret essence of cat-hood I only realized in Rome; and that because I was looking not at one cat but at fifty cats, at a whole herd of cats in the great cat basin round Trajan's Column. The old excavated Forum lies like a basin in the middle of the square; and at the bottom of this dry basin, among broken pillars and statues, lives the independent cat nation; it lives on fishes' heads which the kind-hearted Italians thrown down from above, practises some cult of the moon, and beyond this it clearly does nothing. Now, it was revealed to me there that a cat is not simply a cat but something enigmatic and impenetrable; that a cat is a wild creature. If you see two dozen cats walking about you are surprised by the sudden realization that a cat doesn't walk at all, she slinks. A cat among people is just a cat; a cat among cats is a skulking shadow in the jungle. A cat clearly trusts a man; but she doesn't trust a cat; because she knows it better than we. We say "cat and dog" as the example of social mistrust; I, however, have often seen very intimate friendship between cat and dog; but I have never seen an intimate friendship between two cats; this is, of course, not speaking of feline love-affairs. The cats in Trajan's Forum ignore each other most ostentatiously; if they sit on the same pillar, they sit with their backs toward each other and nervously twitch their tails to make it plain that they put up with the presence of these disreputable neighbours of theirs against their will. If cat looks at cat, she spits; if they meet, they do not look at each other; they never have a common aim; they never have anything to say to each other. At the best of times they tolerate each other in contemptuous and negative silence.

But with you, a man, the cat will talk; she purrs to you, looks up into your eyes and says: "Man, please open this door for me; you valiant trencherman, do give me some of what you're eating; stroke me;

talk to me; let me come on to my armchair." With you she is not a wild, lone shadow; for you she is simply a domestic pussycat, because she trusts you. A wild animal is an animal which is mistrustful. Domestication is simply a state of trustfulness.

And you know, we human beings are only not wild as long as we trust each other. If I—for instance—on leaving home distrusted the first neighbour I met, I should edge near to him growling darkly with every muscle in my thighs tense, ready to spring at his throat at the flicker of an eyelash. If I distrusted the people with whom I travel by tram, I should have to keep my back to the wall and spit like a cat to frighten them; instead of which I hang peacefully on to my strap and read the paper, offering them my unprotected back. If I walk along the street, I am thinking of my work or of nothing at all, without giving a thought to what the passers-by might do to me; it would be awful if I had to eye them askance to see that they were not preparing to devour me. A state of mistrust is the original state of wildness; mistrust is the law of the jungle.

A policy which thrives by stimulating mistrust is a policy of wildness. A cat who distrusts a man sees in him not a man but a wild animal; the man who distrusts another man sees in him a wild animal too. The bond of mutual trust is older than all civilization and culture; and it is more important. You can destroy civilization, and humanity will still be humanity; but if you destroy the state of trust, the world of men becomes a beast-ridden earth.

To show you now, I will go and stroke my own pussycat; she is a great comfort to me because she trusts me, although she is only a little grey beast who has strayed in to me from God knows what corner of the unknown wilds of Prague's back alleys. She starts purring and looks up at me. "Man," she says, "do rub me between my ears."

JUGO-SLAVIA

Introductory Note

IN ATTEMPTING to form an estimate of the literature of Jugo-Slavia we have to remember the salient fact that from the end of the fourteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth century Serbia lay helpless under Turkish domination. Since her release from bondage the revival of letters has naturally been slow. Just as a prisoner kept long in close confinement walks stiffly and blinks in the unaccustomed light of day, so a writer using a language which has been for centuries a mark of servitude might be forgiven for showing an amount of awkwardness and self-consciousness. Yet the delicacy and ease of the following examples as well as the flourishing literature of the Croat and Slovene lands, which had also been living in subjection before the final reunion with Serbia, give little suggestion of this.

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LJUDEVIT VULIČEVIĆ

LJUDEVIT VULIČEVIĆ was born in 1840 and died in 1916. He was one of the greatest masters of Serbian prose in the second half of the nineteenth century. His philosophical and religious essays and treatises are inspired by the lofty idealism of a noble moralist.

The following essays from *Moja mati* have been specially translated for this collection by Josip Torbarina.

I. DAWN

DAWN is the fountain-head of light, hope, and love; at dawn Nature awakes, and all creatures, roused from sleep and strengthened, assemble anew. The night sprinkles the paths of dawn with dew; at dawn the flowers bud, that the sun may find everything adorned. The mute silence of the night breaks, pleasant and merry harmonies begin. The birds sing cheerfully, cool breezes whisper through the thick wood, a festive spirit reigns over hill and dale, and zephyrs caress the calm sea. Serbian mothers, wake your children, that they may see the dawn and be kissed by her first ray.

At dawn I look upon Nature, and a fresh vitality seems to be filling mountains, hills, woods, and fields. I observe various and manifold beauties, and my mind is at ease, when I mark and see them. When

I perceive and note these miracles I am filled with the spirit that created them. When I rise early in the morning and the dawn brightens and kisses me with her beam, I feel that I am better, more spiritual. The weary, the wretched, and the ill yearn for the dawn and call it; long and painful are the nights to one who suffers. Serbian mothers, wake your children, that they may see the dawn and be kissed by her first ray.

At dawn the mind perceives eternal and divine truths. At dawn we see more brightly and hear better the power which so wisely built this world, lighted the stars, and drew the frontiers of the sea. At dawn the senses are more alive to the meaning of the Almighty power, which infused its spirit into all, that all may breathe in its own universal spirit. Serbian mothers, wake your children, that they may see the dawn and be kissed by her first ray.

At dawn it is good to learn, think, and pray, the mind is clearer, and the heart more ardent and sensitive. The body is lighter then, and the soul soars with greater ease above the fleeting forms. In the evening men are ruled by unchaste love and debased to the mire, whilst in the morning pure love ennobles them and lifts them up to Heaven. Serbian mothers, wake your children, that they may see the dawn and be kissed by her first ray.

II. POSTHUMOUS FAME

THE grave is at the end of all human strife. In the tomb vanish and disappear all worldly cares. Another and a vaster sea lies open to the frail ship of our soul. It is a mysterious sea which cannot be seen by mortal eyes. From the cradle to the grave our human mind grasps very little, and it cannot even imagine what comes after death. When we philosophize about the world and life, which ceases with death, we are only babbling like small children, and when we dare to investigate the life which stretches out beyond the confines of mortality, what do we know? Do we reason then, or rave?

The tombstone is the last footprint of our life on earth. Lift the stone and look down into the loathsome grave and you will see the remains of one who is no more. Where is the mind, reason, and intelligence? They are not in the grave. And where is beauty, power, fame? They are not in the grave either. They have gone by like the cry of an owl which is broken up by the winds of the night; they have gone like a breath, like smoke.

You hope that history will record your name among her pages and books, and immortalize you and your works. You hope that after your death people will speak of you, and that grateful posterity will erect monuments to you. Vain hopes! That is a clear enough sign to me

that in your life you have learnt only to look at yourself and think of yourself. This is the reason why you cannot see anything else. The truth is hidden from man by his own fleeting shadow.

Do you think that after your death the sun and stars will not shine in the sky, and that the brooks and rivers will stop their course? . . . Go on deceiving yourself if you find it pleasant and profitable. And even if your descendants remembered and praised you, would you in your tomb hear their voices? Can they waken a dead man, that he may hear them and rejoice in the dust of the tomb? Your intentions are vain indeed, your hope is as wind.

Cavtat, fair white swan, if fortune takes me back to you, I shall question your dead ones; for I know nothing about the living; I do not know them; they do not know me. With rapid steps I shall go up to St. Rock's cemetery, to greet your dead and mine; there my heart will be eased by tears, and I shall say to you: "Farewell! . . ." I shall return an orphan into a foreign country, and as an exile in a strange land I shall end my days.

III. TIME

FROM my mother I learnt how to work, and to hate sloth. She used to say: "Time is eternity. . . . Men waste eternity by wasting time." She used to say: "Good there is none in this world, and perhaps time is our only good; let us not waste it . . . who knows what tomorrow has in store for us."

Time! But what does this word mean? We are born, we live, we die, and think that all this happens in time, as if time were something large, high, wide, and deep; as if it were an immense sphere, in which all the shining worlds revolve, and which contains life, death, and this earth as the blue sea contains the fishes courting and swimming together. What we have done already we call past; what we are now doing is called present; and what we are about to do or intend doing we speak of as future. But all this is within us, not outside us. What is past is stored in our memory, what is present holds our attention, and what is to come is contained in our hopes and expectations.

We always expect something; our life is spent in expectation; I might say that life itself is an expectation. We think that a time will come and is bound to come, when our expectations will be fulfilled. On some occasions the satisfaction and fulfilment of our hopes seem to depend upon time, at others we firmly believe and are convinced that time depends on us and that we can either shorten or lengthen it.

We divide time into epochs, centuries, years, and give names to these fanciful divisions, regarding them as something real in themselves and outside our consciousness. We believe that we have really meas-

ured time, and in fact there is nothing outside our consciousness; there is nothing outside our books, in which we write down our thoughts, our illusions, and our empty words. Time is nothing in itself; it is not a reality, an essence, but a thought, an idea in man, a word in a book, a cut on a stone.

Dear, dead mother, while saying: "Time is eternity. . . . Man wastes eternity by wasting time," perhaps you were telling a great truth, and perhaps (unwillingly, unconsciously) your simple mind reached farther than the philosophers! One who was great in his nation and righteous before God, prayed saying: "Teach us so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

I noticed a resemblance between genius and simple minds; it is to them that truth is revealed: the former attain it by the strength of their mind, the latter by their heart and love. Mediocre men are no men.

ESTONIA

Introductory Note

NOT until the "Period of Awakening," as it has been termed, in the second half of the nineteenth century did the Estonians generally begin to express themselves in a national literature. Dr. Kreuzwald, the "father of Estonian poetry," had written the national epic *Kalevipoeg* and his collections of national songs had awakened an interest in Estonian folklore. Other writers continued this work but life for the bulk of the people was too hard to admit of much æsthetic appreciation of the imaginative works that were then produced. When, however, realists like Juhan Liiv, Eduard Vilde, and August Kitzberg began to set down the tragic struggle for existence endured by the peasant, the stark sincerity of their work commanded attention. Since then the movement known as "Young Estonia" has made a valiant effort to range Estonian literature with that of Europe generally, and to raise the standard of the language. The result has been a marked gain in richness and flexibility, so that what was but a peasant dialect is now a fitting medium for expressing the highest thought. This movement has been specially productive in lyric poetry. It has also brought forward prose-writers like Friedebert Tuglas and Jaan Oksa.

* * *

AINO KALLAS

MADAME AINO KALLAS is the daughter of Professor Dr. Julius Krohn at the University in Helsingfors, Finland, and wife of the present Estonian Minister at the Court of St. James in London. She has published in Finnish several volumes of short stories, novels, and essays, which have been translated into many languages. All her topics are taken from Estonian life. Two of her books have appeared in English: *The White Ship*, with a foreword by John Galsworthy, and *Eros the Player* (Cape). She has lectured in several countries, including Great Britain and America.

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THE GARDEN OF THE MYTH

I

ASIDE of Estonian spiritual life to which too little attention has hitherto been shown, at least in its bearings on the present literature of that country, is what might be called the night-side of the Estonian soul. The well-known Balt scientist v. Baer describes the Estonian character as calm, phlegmatic, and cold-blooded, impervious to diseases of the mind. As well might the Estonian landscape be depicted as consisting only of fertile fields, orchards, luxuriant marsh-meadows between low hills, smooth, evenly-flowing rivers and lakes between low shores. But as in Estonian landscape the miles of wide-stretching bogs and marshes are an inevitable element, so in the Estonian soul do we find, in addition to the above characteristics and side by side with the self-conscious, boastful sturdiness of the Viljandi farmer, grown rich in selling flax, another element full of surprises, sensitive, prone to extremes, with a leaning toward the fantastic and visionary. One need only recall to memory the fanatical religious movement, reminiscent of the legends of the Middle Ages, which scarcely fifty years ago broke out as if by magic on the shores of Tallinn—in an era of steam, electricity, and the modern newspaper—when a host of pilgrims numbering several hundreds awaited for weeks in the Lasnamägi meadow the "white ship" promised by their prophet. A nervous electric sensitiveness is one of the characteristics of the present civilized Estonian community. One may expect at any time conditions that resemble accumulations of electricity, discharging themselves in emotional excitement.

Despite the present strongly materialistic aspect of the Estonian commonwealth, the fantastic element has certainly not vanished. Doubtless the roots of this spiritual characteristic lie extremely deep, and in seeking its foundations the investigator might possibly have to delve as far as the historic strata common to all the Finn races. Naturally it would be wrong to see in this trait something confined to Estonians only, a mistake even to suggest that the night-side of the human soul is more noticeably developed in the Estonian people than elsewhere. Religious movements of the kind described above are not uncommon in more southern latitudes and among the Latin races, and the bent of the Celtic mind toward the fantastic is well known. But though it be granted that such a construction of soul is fundamentally common to mankind, it is still impossible to deny the existence of a peculiar Estonian sensitivity, signs of which are not restricted to our time, but are to be observed already in Estonian folklore. The Estonian alienist J. Luiga has shown, for example, how often hallucinations

appear in Estonian folk-tales. Some one wanders in the night, in darkness; suddenly "a light is struck" around him and he sees a vision, usually fear-inspiring. Sicknesses caused by sudden frights are frequent in the Estonian islands and even on the mainland. The Estonian prose folk-myths—which in this certainly resemble those of many other countries—are rich in elements of terror: they teem with all manner of fearsome beings, and with numberless tales of human wolves and dog-faced men, with nightmares and weird apparitions. It is as though the fantasy of a people oppressed by centuries of slavery had consciously set itself to seek for causes of terror and tribulation, as though the horrors of actual existence had been insufficient, and it had felt itself compelled to bear the burden of its daily experience even in its dreams, shuddering before the phantoms of its own brain.

The constant state of depression both of soul and body created by slavery, undoubtedly nurtured this "graveyard imagination," as Tuglas calls it. Brains worn out by a lifetime of half-starvation were favourable soil for fantastic ideas. In addition came endless years of war with all the horrors of a fugitive's life, when the sensitive, vision-filled imagination of the people fed on the gloom of the deep pits and caverns in which the inhabitants of whole villages cowered for days at a stretch. A considerable space in Estonian tales of dread is given over, as might be expected, to bogs and morasses. There rise mysterious white stallions and gigantic haycocks, the terror which they spread is inexhaustible, they represent the great unknown, the great sphinx, endowed by the peasant imagination with sombre visions, full of the poetry of the will-o'-the-wisp.

Taine spoke the truth when he remarked that every gifted author unconsciously reflects the character of his race. In rare cases he can be a synthesis of all the various traits which together build up the soul of his race and tribe. More often the racial inheritance is scattered, and different individuals reflect each his own fraction of the great, common, racial capital. Of this connexion with his race an author may often be almost unconscious, and in no way need its fruits amount to what we are accustomed to call "national" characteristics in literature. There are examples enough of authors who in choice of subjects are fully cosmopolitan, and who yet, in a deeper significance, have been the interpreters of their own race.

It would appear as though Friedebert Tuglas, the most gifted prose-writer of the Young Estonian school, had received in heritage from the race-spirit of the Estonians the sensitive and fantastic side of that spirit, the graveyard imagination. It is extremely probable that only through contact with certain great kindred souls in the world's literature was he awakened to a full knowledge of this racial heritage. However that may be, he is a direct descendant of all the numberless, nameless makers of folk-tales who once created the Estonian romanticism of fear,

hearing in the howling of wolves the plaint of an imprisoned human soul.

II

"The creation of a myth—that is the highest aim of an artist," wrote Tuglas in one of his later articles. And elsewhere he writes: "We have lost all hope of crystallizing truth in a scientific axiom—let us attempt at least to approach it in presentiments, moods, and dreams. The *mare tenebrarum* of the human soul is so boundlessly deep that no plummet can sound it."

An attempt in this direction is plainly to be seen in Tuglas' collection of short stories *Saatus* (Fate). An immeasurable distance divides the present intellectual man from the *Götterdämmerung* of the time when myths were created, the perfectly naïve and fruitful primal chaos of mankind which alone possessed the legend-evolving power of imaginative exaggeration, the unbridled fantasy, encompassing heaven and earth, necessary for the creation of a myth. It is difficult for us to return to the Paradise of the childhood of mankind, when also the myth, the flower of divine legend, blossomed, the cherub of our future keeping watch at the gate. There have been great creative artists who have poured new components into the old myths common to all humanity, but how many new myths have appeared in the literature of the world since the printing-press was discovered?

And yet every now and again spirits are born in whom, in some inexplicable and secret manner, one discerns a connexion with those distant and vanished times—dreamers, diviners, poetical explorers who expand the area of poetry into the realms of imaginations.

In his new collection of short stories Friedebert Tuglas took a decisive step: he said a final farewell to all reality. The fragile wall of glass between the real and the non-existent had broken down. True, he has borrowed from reality a number of superficial details, but the illumination is another, the dimensions new. Beneath the visible and tangible world and behind it, another world ever makes itself felt, many times larger and more terrible, and it is precisely the constant pressure of this invisible world made visible that creates the oppressive, choking atmosphere which floods many of the later novels of Tuglas. In the beginning, the dimensions seem quite natural, but as the story progresses a strange hallucination seizes the reader: the outlines grow as though by the power of some unknown force until they melt into immensity.

Despite the apparent realism of the story, one is conscious the whole time of that "road in the air" of which Huysmans speaks in the foreword to his *Là-bas*. In plain language, truth and imagination are deceptively mingled. The author's purpose has been to make the thresh-

old between dream and reality as invisible as possible, to convey the reader blindfolded into his new, unreal world. All the details are undeniably real, but the world which they unite in forming never existed elsewhere than in the poet's vision-filled brain.

The emotion of fear has always occupied a large space in the work of Tuglas. He has written of the "voluntary nightmares and home-made phantoms" of his youth. Fear is undoubtedly a component in his blood; there was obviously no need for him to go outside the circle of his own experience in order to describe it. On the contrary, his instinct is never so sure as if his treatment of fear, that excitement of the soul, the strength and intensity of which, when culminating in the fear of death, can be compared only with the soul-shaking quality of eroticism. In the description of the gradual awakening of this instinct, so paralysing in its effect on all other instincts, Tuglas celebrates his greatest literary triumphs. A sense of pursuit recurs constantly in his work.

Terror and a sense of oppression now dominate the imagination of Tuglas. But the dread depicted by him is only partly real, only partly caused by actual circumstances. The greatest incentive to fear is born without reason, arises out of the void, out of *nothing,* and Man is powerless before it as before all cosmic forces. And in the new novels of Tuglas broods that nameless, apprehensive terror, the roots of which lie in the incomprehensible tragedy of all that exists and has being, seeming in itself to be the reaction of the created against an unknown, hostile cosmic order. The same dread that Edgar Allan Poe compressed into the one word: "Nevermore!"

The imagination of Poe, stimulated by alcohol and morphine, recurs more than once to the mind while turning over Tuglas' latest stories. There is a kind of resemblance between the great Anglo-Saxon and the Young Estonian visionary, though it exists only in the fundamental atmosphere of their work. Poe retains his outward calm and matter-of-factness in the midst of his recital of fear; his most fantastic visions are related coolly and circumspectly. The style of Tuglas is much more feverish and nervous, prone to lyricism; in the tenseness of the atmosphere one feels, particularly in the opening stages, the influence of the Russian writers of tales of dread, especially that of Leonid Andreyev. But the essence of the terror created is in both cases the same: the terror of the non-existent.

In no other story has Tuglas succeeded so completely in displaying this cosmic fear as in his short story *Popi and Huhuu,* the story of a dog and monkey left solitary after the death of their master.

In an old house, among pictures, rolls of parchment, and the apparatus of alchemy, lives the master with his beagle Popi and his monkey Huhuu. The master is old and feeble, and going off one morning into the town, he closes the door after him, and never returns. The two animals are left to their own resources. Popi is a wise and philosophic

dog, of the race of Anatole France's Ricquet, held in thrall by boundless love for his master. The master's wisdom has no limits. He goes out, an empty basket on his arm, and returns with the basket full of meat! Who else but the master could do this? But the day wears on without a sign of the master. The monkey Huhuu grows more and more restless in his cage; evening draws near, and still no return. Suddenly the hungry Huhuu breaks the bars of his cage and at one glance sees himself master of the situation. A wild, mad game now begins. It is as though with the monkey, all the worst instincts of mankind had broken loose and started a devilish, bestial orgy. Huhuu immediately takes over the mastership of the house, sets himself in his master's place, sleeps in his bed, arrays himself in his purple cloak, transforms his peaceful study into a pile of rubbish, breaking and destroying everything he can lay his hands on. Finally he discovers a barrel of spirits, and now there are no bounds to his cruelty. He tortures and ill-uses Popi, who is half-crazy with fright, feeling instinctively the chasm between his present and his former master. In the hungry, tortured brain of Popi the memory of a Golden Age and a Good Master still dwells. But he is after all a dog, and as such accustomed to fear and to honour. He *must* have a master, and thus in the absence of a better, he regards as his master the wild and evil Huhuu, the caricature of the man who has passed out of his life. As he had at one time admired the wisdom, kindness, and beauty of his former master, in like manner he now admires the cruelty, fickleness, and ugliness of his new master. And when Huhuu, after a thieving expedition through the window, brings home a basket containing a piece of bloody meat, it becomes finally clear to Popi that Huhuu is a master too. Thus the dog and the monkey eke out a wretched family life in the forgotten, isolated house, until one day Huhuu finds a box of explosives and dashes it on to the floor, with the result that the whole house, with dog and monkey, is blown into the air.

Every detail in this remarkable story bears the impress of truth. As such, and as a mere study in animal psychology, it would be rated high. But throughout the whole work another reality makes itself inevitably felt, the "inherent symbolism of matter," as Tuglas once calls it. It swells into a symbolic poem above the level of animal souls to human and cosmic agony, to the tragedy of all creation. Ungovernable, destructive forces rage in the world, whence the spirit of God seems to have fled. Mankind is helpless before these blind and incomprehensible forces, the hostility of which it feels and to which it nevertheless submits, treasuring in its inner consciousness as a distant vision the memory of a lost Paradise, even as the beagle Popi cherishes the memory of the days of a good master. In the feeling of helplessness that overwhelms a shelterless animal dependent on mankind, when it feels its provider and protector gone for ever, there is something of the same sense of

affliction that Maeterlinck has depicted in his play *Les Aveugles,* where the blind sit helpless round the dead body of him who tended them.

Attention has already been drawn to the constant recurrence of the terror of pursuit in the work of Tuglas. It returns again and again, now in dreams, now in reality. It is probably no mistake to assume that the constant danger of detection and imprisonment to which the author was subjected for upward of ten years—Friedebert Tuglas was exiled under the Tsarist *régime* for his revolutionary ideas—with the resulting necessity of frequent changes of domicile, was in itself sufficient to give rise to flights of imagination of a fixed character.

Undoubtedly the frequency of these panic-stricken flights in imagination, which recur with all the persistency of an *idée fixe,* has behind it much of personal experience.

III

However, the intoxication of terror is not the only obsession known to Friedebert Tuglas. His erotic, strongly sensual imagination is not sexless like that of Poe, with whom the voluptuousness of fear makes up for the absence of that of love. Beauty, too, is a drug, like hashish or opium, intoxicating both the intellect and the blood.

In the story *Mailma Löpus* (At the End of the World) Tuglas' imagination has woven one of the most fantastic of his fabrics, gleaming with all the colours of the rainbow. Of all the works of Tuglas it approaches closest to his new literary ideal: the creation of a myth. In one sense it is, at the same time, a variant of the Tannhäuser legend. One could draw other comparisons also. Quite of itself, the very nature of the theme brings to the reader's mind Gulliver's adventures in the land of giants and young Glumdalclitch, even though we admit the infinitely more lyrical and romantic character of Tuglas' young Estonian ship's boy as compared with intellectual Anglo-Saxon voyager, the passion of the Hiigla-Maid-Venus of the island in her boundless intoxication of love as contrasted with the calm giantess of Swift.

The ship of Tuglas fares in its journeys over strange waters across the boundary that no man has ever crossed. They come into pitch darkness in which the ship gropes for several days; when finally the darkness dissolves, a number of uninhabited islands lie before the travellers. A boat is lowered, and seven men, among them the youngest of all on board, the ship's boy, land on the largest island. The boy is sent up into a tree to keep watch, but falling asleep in the foliage, he is left behind on the island by his companions. Wandering alone there he meets a beautiful giant maiden who takes him to her home, where she lives with her father, the only other inhabitant of the island. Between Hiigla-Maid and the child of Man, a great and all-devouring love is born, and their days and nights pass by in an endless intoxication of

love. The giant maiden is like Nature herself, she is everywhere present. "She was everywhere whither I turned, in the trees, the lakes, the meadows. Heaven and earth were filled with her. The luxuriant grass was like her hair, I clutched at a wisp of fog as though at her plait, trembled on a quaking bog as on her breast. The nightly darkness was like her embrace, the flash of the Northern Lights like the throbbing of her blood." But no human being can endure an incessant, inextinguishable fire of soul and body; he feels he is being consumed to ashes in the embrace of the giant maiden, he attempts again and again to save himself by flight, until finally he thrusts his sword into Hiigla-Maid's heart, killing his beloved. But on his return to his own village after many venturous voyagings, the wanderer finds everything little and confined, and eternal longing consumes his breast. "Human, all too human was everything around me. Too confined, too mean for one who has lived with giants in eternal space!—What were to me the thoughts and works of men! What could the love of the daughters of men signify to me! I took up a beggar's staff. Many years have gone by. I have no home." And this second Tannhäuser, delivered from the Mount of Venus, longs to return thither. He prays to the sun: "O light of the world, take up my agony in your ray, carry my longing beyond the seas! I am humble and poor, but if I have not the strength to live there, let me at least die there!"

A brief account can give no inkling of the beauties of this story, disturbed here and there by a too insistent lyricism. There are pages which resemble the rhythmic and inspired prose of the Song of Solomon. But there are also pages, the graphic clarity of which brings to the mind the style of the classic masters of story-telling.

The reality of dreams, their right to exist side by side with everyday life—such is the refrain of these fantastic novels. It is for the reader to try to follow these hallucinations of the human mind, to accompany it on the most unexpected Odysseys. If in the ramifications of the human mind there is room for such agony and distress, for such feverish visions of beauty, a place must be granted them in Art also.

In these stories a modern spirit once again approaches the closed gate of the mysterious garden of the Myth.

ROUMANIA

Introductory Note

FROM the very beginning the essay in Roumanian literature has taken a serious turn. Criticism has predominated, and in this field Titus Maiorescu is the foremost figure. In his steps have followed Professor Mehedintzi and Marcu Beza, examples of whose work are given here. These reveal a serious concern for the principles on which sound government is based—always a vital consideration in countries where political unrest has prevailed—and a keen faculty for criticism and appreciation.

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S. MEHEDINTZI

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The translation has been specially made for this collection by the Hon. Mrs. Lucy Byng.

QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR A STATESMAN

IN EVERY age and in all circumstances the man who carries on his conscience responsibility for the direction of a nation must regard himself as the instrument of a life at variance with his personal interests. Friends and enemies for him must exist only as friends or enemies of the State.

It was so, to give a characteristic example, with the two Pitts. After he had guided England for many years amid the greatest perils, and led her to success after success, the venerable Pitt, although embittered by personal adversaries, although weak from disease, and nearly paralysed, came down to Westminster supported on the one side by a

crutch, and on the other by the shoulder of his son, who had not yet attained his twentieth year, in order once again to give advice to the country at the grave moment of war with the American colonies. In the House of Lords silence prevailed as in a church. The old man's voice was scarcely audible, but the emotion had been so great that he fell struck by apoplexy beside the rostrum to which his whole life had added lustre. The son, when barely twenty-three years of age, obtained the premiership. In everything he showed himself a worthy successor to his father—indeed he surpassed him. Completely absorbed by the interest of public life he remained unmarried. Frugal as a philosopher, although he had an income of three hundred a year only, he rejected a sinecure of £3000 a year, giving it to a distinguished soldier who was becoming blind, and thus a pension was saved to the public. In his day there was no idea of wasting the public money, nor even of being liberal; no costly monument was erected, nothing that seemed a superfluous expense. The only thought of the young leader of English politics was for the State. With unbending determination, with unflagging energy, he conducted for years a struggle against Napoleon, forming against him coalition after coalition. Contemporaries likened him to Hannibal who swore to his father never to make peace with the Romans. It is a fact that William Pitt had no animosity toward Bonaparte, of whose Consulate he expected, on the contrary, an era of quietude and goodwill. But, when the fight became more intense, his mind as leader of the State was fixed exclusively upon one object; the maintenance of England. He would not listen to the rumour of the Austrian surrender at Ulm. But when the Dutch journals confirmed the news, the Prime Minister was mortally struck.

Naturally such examples are rare. One cannot ask from every one such concentration of mind upon the State or such sacrifice of private life. But it is equally certain that no one can be a statesman in the lofty sense of the word without this capacity for making himself the impersonal instrument through which to fulfil the historical destiny of a nation.

"I should have cast life away like a dirty rag," said Bismarck, "if I had not had before me the high aim of the State, or if I had descended even for a moment into the ranks of those who pull the strings of transitory interests and passions. . . ." So should a statesman be; as far as possible impersonal. He must not have individual sympathies, or individual antipathies. Such sentiments may be tolerated in a "party man" as they appease his vindictive instincts. But the truly politic man knows no such sentiments. Of him holds good the fine phrase: "Political mistakes are to be righted, not revenged."

The second essential for a statesman is that he should be a realist. Usually this is understood to mean a man occupied with affairs in

contradistinction to one confined to the sphere of ideas. It is true that there also exists the vulgar realism of those who measure the value of life according to its material amenities. Some base person, as soon as his moustache starts to grow, ingratiates himself with everybody, and before he turns grey upon the temples reaches fortune and political position; it is only necessary to circumvent the penal code with the attention of the wolf going round a trap, taking care not to catch a foot in it. In this way arrives, and even more rapidly, any sort of brigand, until he is unmasked. But we are not here concerned with such persons. On the contrary, in political life the realist is precisely one who understands the fundamental in ideas; the one who perceives that there can be nothing in fact that has not first originated in the mind of some one, and that the greatest happiness for a statesman is to hit upon for himself and for others the most fruitful idea for the development of the country which he governs. Ideas, by the grace of God, are found on every bush. In every library there is a maze of premises and conclusions. All that man has thought from Aristotle down to Henri Poincaré may be found between the covers of a few books. The question is: which are the ideas applicable in regard to the existing circumstances of a people? How can one be an actualist, and not a fantastic ready to run after the mirage of every kind of fancy?

Such a realist was Frederick II. Although he made verses on the eve of a battle—and bad ones—what a remarkable intuition for the needs of his era! While in France Huguenots were still looked at askance, and in Spain there persisted still the odious entertainment of burning heretics at the stake—even under the eyes of the royal family—the monarch at Potsdam, imbued with the spirit of the Encyclopædists, realized that "the old systems stand no longer; to try to resuscitate them means we run after shadows." Consequently, liberty of conscience! "Save your souls according to that which each one thinks best," he replied to his subjects at Neufchâtel. The State should not interfere with the private convictions of anyone.

And again, what wholesome realism in his outlook on the political and social organization! When he felt that the old *régime* must go, instead of saying, like the autocrat at Versailles: *"L'Etat c'est Moi!"* he anticipated the whole French Revolution in a single phrase: "The sovereign is the first servant of the State. . . ." Perhaps in all the history of mankind there is no more characteristic example of what it means to be a realist. Very rightly Mirabeau said that "After such a king the art of governing will fall back into its infancy."

But it is not enough to choose ideas.

In the practice of life every idea is of just so much value as the worth of the man entrusted with its application. To be a complete realist in politics means therefore that one must discover the collabo-

rators most capable of embodying an idea. In this particularly can one differentiate between the elevated sentiment of the statesman and that of the professional politician. The latter is never at a loss. He recruits his collaborators according to minor characteristics or by chance. His judgment of men is guided by the whispers of the Ganymedes who fill his wineglass; by class suggestions; by sycophants who at tea or dinner come round retailing to him scandal, real or invented, by which they excite his curiosity. For such people even the most unimportant political agent can find a plausible lie with which to make himself necessary to a patron capable of following such mountebanks in the choice and verification of party worth.

The fundamental sophism of a politician is the belief that directly one passes from the physical world to the moral world causality can be replaced by a *hocus pocus*. One may therefore be dishonest; one may lie; one may change the opinions of yesterday for others diametrically opposite, and yet succeed! As though there could exist side by side with rational arithmetic, in which the total is exactly expressed by the addition of certain given units, also an arithmetic irrational, which is capable of turning loss into gain or gain into deficit. This is a sophism of the first order by which the politician as well as the political romanticist, like any common juggler, deceives and is himself deceived.

On the contrary, the true realist, like any man of science, is convinced that, as all atoms are subjected to the law of gravitation so is it also in the moral world. Facts—even when one cannot analyze them—have exact relationship; being inexorably governed by the correlation between cause and effect. "Every political and moral problem," said Cavour, "is a curve, every element of which must be tested by every kind of minute calculation." Hence the anxiety of the leader not to allow himself to be misled by appearances in the choice of those he selects to put an idea into effect. Hence his unshaken belief that every mistake in the scale of values upon which public life is founded will have as practical consequence an inevitable disequilibrium which will jeopardize his work as governor of the country. Hence for a real statesman the necessity of following rigorously the Sulpician method, "no private friendship," when it is a question of choosing the instruments of state. With your money, with your house, with your estate, with all your belongings you may do as you like. You may invite whom you like beneath your roof, and make him your bosom friend. That is your affair. But to give the charges of state into the hands of such or such a one just because he is your friend, relation, or satellite . . . that, never. Cavour pushed the scruple so far that he declared official newspapers to be a danger. The public man when he has chosen his collaborators well has no need to veil the truth. His actions and those of the right and proper colleagues with whom he has surrounded him-

self are his best justification not only before posterity, but also before his contemporaries.

But even all this is not enough. After he has decided upon the ideas and chosen the men to carry them out, the statesman has yet another condition to fulfil. Not ideas only, sentiment too rules the world. Consequently the superior politician must have the gift of inspiring his contemporaries to the fulfilment of his ideal, and keep them steadfast in the path. One example is Pericles. Of his there remains nothing in writing; only a few characteristic sayings such as: "Aegina must, like a gathering in a man's eye, be removed from Piraeus," and some decrees. But for a period of forty years he was the source of enthusiasm which stimulated all the energy of his fellow citizens to increase the glory of Athens; his was the will and the character which did not falter during the greatest calamities. From the expedition in the Euxine Sea where he showed himself alone at the head of the fleet in order to intimidate the barbarians, down to the naval manœuvres each year in order to keep watch on his allies, down to the conferences with philosophers and artists at Aspasia's house, he was the spirit who gave impulse to the life of all his contemporaries. "Monuments which seemed as though they would take centuries to perfect were quite finished" under his rule, relates Plutarch. Phidias was his right hand; Calicrates built the Parthenon; Metagene the Temple at Eleusis; Mnesicles the Propylæa. Everything rose as from out of the ground because over all were his eye and ardent enthusiasm. A workman who fell from the front of the Propylæa, and injured himself so severely that the physicians declared he was doomed to die, recovered completely by means of a remedy given by Pericles, which had been revealed to him in a dream by the goddess Pallas Athena!

The truth is this: genius in politics just as in art can only possess one whose heart vibrates with a great and pure passion, and whose mind is fortified by a powerful and steadfast will. For only such a one can direct every one to action and sacrifice, thus becoming the representative of an epoch even though there remain behind him only two or three phrases as it so happened to Pericles.

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MARCU BEZA

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Literary Man," and from it the following essay is taken by the author's permission.

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THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

IN THE year 1848 some young painters, united by similar ideas in regard to art, founded a group apart which they called the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The name was intended to designate some undefined aspirations rather than any connexion with the Italian Primitives, about whom they had little knowledge. It was only by accident that Lasinio's book of engravings after the frescoes in the Campo Santo, in Pisa, fell into their hands. The study of these, and partly also the reading of some pages from Ruskin's *Modern Painters,* made the idea clearer, strengthened in them the conviction that, from Raphael on, art was led—or rather was kept stationary—by certain conventional formulas, and that it was necessary for artists to escape from their restriction, seeking to render that which they themselves see and feel in the wide world around them. This contact with real life naturally brought with it a greater sincerity, and therefore an approach to the Primitives.

Take, for instance, the *Ecce Ancilla Domini* of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. In a bedroom where the candlelight pales before the dawn which penetrates through the window, the angel appears—a lily in his hand. The Virgin, half raised in bed, regards him with an expression of frightened wonder. Among the colours, which are few in number, a virginal white predominates; both figures are clad in white linen garments with no other adornment than haloes of gold. Everything is drawn direct from nature, and with a so unaccustomed simplicity that it could be compared to similar canvases by Fra Angelico, or Fra Filippo Lippi.

There was no question of adopting the methods of the Primitives. Their timid, almost naïve, piety was of the spirit of past days. Since then, other influences had appeared. Beginning with Percy's *Reliques* romanticism opened up new fields of wonder to the imagination. Certain poets dwelt insistently upon a strange world fashioned out of their own fantasy, where, however, the illusion of reality is sustained by a wealth of suggestive detail—a kind of embroidery in words which pleased Rossetti and his companions, and which indeed entered as a leading characteristic in their work. The first canvases of the Pre-Raphaelites are inspired by pieces in the same style as John Keats' *Isabella* and *The Eve of St. Agnes*. Really striking is their attraction to the poet who some thirteen years before had been unable to control

his admiration before those same frescoes reproduced by Lasinio, and who ends his well-known *Ode on a Grecian Urn:*

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

The mystic conception of these verses could embrace nearly all the works of the Pre-Raphaelites. Faithful observers, preserving a great deal of the spontaneity of nature itself, they have succeeded in embodying in the radiance of colour beings and objects which a powerful breath of imagination raises to some truly original conceptions. All are poets of a kind. Even John Everett Millais, more of a realist in wealth of subject, and more dramatic, what an unexampled picture of dreaming he gives us in *Autumn Leaves!*

Four girls have lighted a fire of dry leaves by the edge of a wood, while about them falls the twilight. The purple of the last rays of sunset quivers on the heap of yellow leaves, and on the smoke which ascends from them, and on the distant mist through which are revealed the silhouettes of some poplar trees. For a while the girls are gazing in a silence intensely serious, as though the melancholy of autumn invades even them at their heedless age.

Drawing and painting present here a meticulous care which Millais disregarded later, replacing it by a treatment broader and freer, as is evident in a canvas which one can with difficulty forget after seeing it at the Tate Gallery.

Some one is reading by night the letters of his lost love. Toward dawn, in the mingling of the uncertain light from outside with the rosy flame of some candles by the pillow, the curtains of the bed open and the beloved herself appears; he holds out a hand to her, crying, "Speak! Speak!" Erect though she stands before him, eyes fixed, with her wedding veil about her, she appears unaccountably remote. Is it really she in person, or the phantom of a feverish illusion? Perhaps the painter himself did not know: the fact that he did not reveal it is a further proof of artistic feeling.

The well-known picture by Holman Hunt, *The Triumph of the Innocents,* has been donated to the National Gallery. At night, along an unknown road, goes Joseph, who leads by the bridle the ass carrying the Virgin with Jesus in her arms. The latter turns a smiling face toward a crowd of children—a whole procession of them, three in front, others to the right and at the back, float in an unearthly light, with ears of corn in their hands, with branches, with garlands of anemones, looking like anemones themselves so vividly are they coloured, although it was intended to represent the spirits of the infants massacred by the order of Herod. This unsuitable rendering of allegorical conceptions by decided outlines, patiently executed, where one can distinguish every object, is felt in his other important picture,

The Light of the World. Jesus knocks at the door of conscience which is overgrown with weeds. The face, certainly, is of a lofty, meditative sadness; yet the manner of the presentation—the long garment, part of which shines beneath the lighted lantern held in the left hand, the golden cloak fastened at the throat by a jewelled clasp, is rather theatrical. One recognizes in it, not the Jesus of the Christian spirit, but a Jesus travestied in the pomp of the later hierarchies.

With a pleasure all the greater one passes to the paintings devoid of any moral significance, in which the artist has sought to catch the elusive charm of pieces such as Keats' *Isabella,* and Tennyson's *Lady of Shalott.* Both approach to the style of Rossetti, whose rare personality could not but have found an echo in all who knew him; he himself was in great part influenced by his love for Elizabeth Siddal. From the obscurity of a London shop, where her beauty attracted the notice of a painter, she was brought into the Pre-Raphaelite circle. Here she met Rossetti, becoming first his model, then his wife—a flower of rare exotic freshness which taken up and transplanted did not flourish long. At her death, not two years after marriage, Rossetti approached her coffin with the manuscript of some poems in his hand which he placed next her cold cheek, telling her, with sighs, that he had written the poems for her, that they belonged to her, and she must take them with her; and this was done. A long while after, friends, bethinking themselves of the irreparable loss of the poems, succeeded in persuading him to have them exhumed. The contents of the manuscript were incorporated in the volume of *Poems* (1870); this was followed some eleven years later by *Ballads and Sonnets* which display the same mastery of manipulation with the pen as with the brush. This happy blending of poet and painter, although sometimes marred by contempt for the limitations of the two arts, places him in any case upon a special pinnacle, where his soul reflects to the full, not only the harmony of colour and form as such, but also the depth, the incomprehensible, which is within them:

> Under the arch of Life, where love and death,
> Terror and mystery guard her shrine, I saw
> Beauty enthroned.

Thus he wrote of his *Sibylla Palmifera,* a pale young woman with a palm branch, lost in thought before life, surrounded by veiled guardians of the unknown. As a pendant to this rather spiritual beauty the artist places his *Lady Lilith,* the successor to Adam's first wife, and who, according to the Talmudic legend, bore serpents only. She sits upon a stool; with her right hand she undoes her golden hair, with the left she holds a mirror in which she regards with satisfaction her face and her bare shoulders. Sure of herself and of the power of her

charms; without love although voluptuous, never satiated with pleasure; or as Rossetti himself describes her in a sonnet:

> Young while the earth is old,
> And, subtly of herself contemplative,
> Draws men to watch the bright net she can weave,
> Till heart and body and life are in its hold.
> The rose and poppy are her flowers; for where
> Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed scent
> And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?

This quality of investing with a cloak of imagery and symbols conceptions from a world of mystic thought, Rossetti shares in a measure with Dante; doubtless through Dante's influence too, since from his youth up Rossetti knew well the Florentine poet whose *Vita Nuova* he translated. Then, in Dante's love for Beatrice, Rossetti perceived a strange similarity, as though expressly decreed, with his own love. And the sad accents of the *Vita Nuova* and the *Divine Comedy,* pierced him with an intimate thrill, mingled with his own sadness; certain episodes haunted him constantly, with the insistence of precious visions, as was the case especially with that of Francesca da Rimini. And what a picture he made out of it!

In the light of a fair day the lovers find themselves by a window where the Malatesta shield bears witness to their place of meeting; beyond that there are few details. What place is there for them when it is a question of breaking down the barriers between two souls? Simple clothes of green and rose-colour, a branch of flowers in blossom fallen to the ground, while upon her knee is the book concerning Lancelot which has only served to hasten that which for long they have desired with such fear. The clasp of the hands, the pressure of the burning lips, the eyes closed with the excess of happiness, tell everything. What has been, what may come, they cannot think of now, at this instant—an instant only, it is true, but one beyond measure, rising from out the contents of time by the overwhelming plenitude of its bliss. Here is the great passion of the ages which may redeem all suffering or for ever crush two lives. And one experiences no falling off, as so often happens, when one turns to the text of the inspiration; the words seem more charged with meaning:

> *La bocca mi bacio tutto tremante:*
> *Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse;*
> *Quel giorno piu non vi leggemmo avante.*

To this same series of pictures belong the *Salute to Beatrice, Dante's Dream,* and above all *Beata Beatrix.* They date from the period when Rossetti's grief at the loss of his beloved one had become milder; from the depths of memory, where she hovered in the light of platonic

reverie, he drew her face, placing her far away in the setting of a Florentine balcony. As she stands there, her back turned to the setting sun, her head slightly tilted, golden rays play in the gold of her luxuriant hair, forming a kind of aureole. A bird arrives and places between her clasped fingers a poppy—symbol of the death which is to come. At this moment a trance of ecstasy overcomes her, and one feels how a consoling calm spreads over the pale face, the mouth, the eyes: beneath the closed eyelid her sight is not lost but seems to discern in the far distance, as through the crystal of a lake, the world of celestial bliss toward which she turns, guiding Dante, a shadowy Eros at the far end. . . .

In woman Rossetti sought the embodiment of the highest beauty; and therefore he has represented her under so many different forms, from *The Blessed Damozel* murmuring tender whispers among the stars, to *Proserpina* in whom a moonbeam which has strayed into Inferno rouses the longing for earthly joys. All of them, too, have similar characteristics, forming practically a single type which one sees again and again in Rossetti, and partly too in the other Pre-Raphaelites: the swanlike neck supporting the head which is frequently half concealed by luxuriant hair, the elongated face with the seductive mouth drooping at the corners, and the eyes, more especially the eyes . . . seldom have eyes been created more entrancing with their expression so profound, so remote, so melancholy. Whether she wears priceless ornaments or embroideries, or simply transparent draperies the colour of the sea; whether she appears under over-arching foliage, or in mysterious chambers with profusion of flowers and aromatic plants; whether she watches the phantoms which pass around her with burning torches, or is in the act of listening to magic instruments —the eyes remain dominated by the shadow of thought in striking contrast to the lips, red, full, as though desirous of all life's pleasure. Only on a few occasions do the eyes lose their sadness, in the case of some girl of tender age, or when the torment of the mind is spent in sadness, as in Sir John Millais' *Ophelia*. And then nature comes to the fore in an uninterrupted burst of splendour: violet-blue sparkles the water on the wedding gown of the drowned figure, luscious green grow tufts of reeds, yonder hang boughs of white inflorescence, while through the magic silence a robin sings among the willows.

This thirst for beauty, pervaded and made feverish by the consciousness of death and futility, is felt more strongly in *The Earthly Paradise* of William Morris. Is not the very title strange? Some voyagers from Scandinavia, in order to escape from the pestilence, travel across the Atlantic to find the dwelling-place of eternal youth. After many and great perils they reach a settlement of Greek colonists. Here they are well received, and at the feasts given in their honour they relate a number of fairy tales and legendary histories. One hears in the

cadence of the verses, blowing softly from the old world of wonders, as in one's sleep one hears sweet music in which, however, sounds often the deep note of the transitoriness of life—the sadness of pagan literature, although the whole atmosphere is medieval. The turning of Morris and most of the other Pre-Raphaelites toward the Middle Ages comes from something other than the love of adventure, the forays of feudal barons killing each other, the fearful spectres in gloomy castles. Investigation of the Gothic era changed a great deal ideas about a time which it had been believed was very backward. Ruskin included in a wide survey not only of architecture, painting, and sculpture, but everything that had been produced for the satisfaction of the feeling for beauty; and, placing them in connexion with the social life of that time, brought to light an art of unexpected efflorescence which had then commenced to decline. Before the perspective opened up by *The Stones of Venice*, Morris put to himself the question: How would it be possible to revive that state of things? And with the confident action of a master skilled in many things, assisted by Rossetti and Burne-Jones, he founded an organization in which artists worked together with pupils, leaving the latter at liberty to try their talent in the making of furniture, stained glass, tapestries, carpets. Finally he busied himself, among other things, with the graphic art. In the measure that he advanced in such undertakings he arrived at the conviction that it would be necessary to change the whole social system of the day, replacing it by one in which art would be the real object of its mission, and the vehicle of goodwill between men. There must not be a handful of rich people profiting beyond measure from the toil of others; no work-slaves or machine-like workers who yoke themselves to the mill just because they must earn; no objects which, even if not exactly ugly, yet reflect a taste for luxury and ostentation; no poverty-stricken towns. On the contrary, one would be proud of them and one would pass along well-kept streets, between buildings of which the architecture would speak to one of the soul of past generations; and one would enter houses where everything, from the pictures on the wall to the tumbler for water, would be as beautiful as it would be suited to its use: and one would feel that all had been produced for love of the work by healthy human beings, with leisure and goodwill. . . .

Is not this an ideal all the more worthy to be followed just because its rising above the limits of the usual preoccupation with gain would cause many to call it a pure Utopia?

UNITED STATES

Introductory Note

IN THE *Edinburgh Review* for January, 1820, Sydney Smith asked rather scornfully, "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture, or statue?" In a century the tables have turned, and the question has been answered most effectively by the steady stream of books, plays, and pictures which now, without intermission, crosses the Atlantic from west to east. A replica of Saint-Gaudens' *Abraham Lincoln* stands in Parliament Square, London; Sargent's "Wertheimer" portraits occupy a place of honour in the London National Gallery; American plays fill the bills of the London theatres; American books are prominent on the English railway bookstalls; and, until quite recently, American films had a virtual monopoly of the British screens. This is a quick change indeed, and one which Sydney Smith may be excused for not having foreseen.

For the beginnings of American literature were unpromising enough. During the Colonial period, which lasted nearly two hundred years, there was little time or inclination for writing. Those early settlers had an uphill fight against all manner of odds and it is not surprising that material considerations came uppermost, precluding most of the refinements which formed part of the older civilization which they had left. The writing that was done was purely imitative. It served its day and immediate purpose and had little permanent value.

In the Revolutionary period which followed, the scattered units of which the country had been composed coalesced, and unity was gradually achieved. Yet literature was still very much in the background. The minds which might have furnished it were too much preoccupied with affairs to give consideration to letters.

Not until the republic was firmly and finally established did we begin to see signs of the beginning of that amazing productivity which has upset the calculations of others as well as Sydney Smith. The advantages of a stable government and wonderful material resources began rapidly to make themselves felt. Increasing wealth and leisure created a demand for culture. At the same time Emerson urged America to trust herself and to cease being a mere dependency of Europe. "We have listened too long," he asserted, "to the courtly muses of Europe. . . . We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; and we will speak our own minds."

The result, as we have seen, has been surprising, and nowhere more

so than in the fields of the essay and the short story. It is noteworthy that the growth of the essay on American soil follows along lines very similar to those which we have noted elsewhere. Benjamin Franklin began, as unknown writers have begun at various times and in distant parts of the world, by collecting and classifying maxims. These he issued in the form of *Poor Richard's Almanac,* and the collection became extremely popular. It had just the qualities that inevitably appeal to a primitive community with little leisure for extended reading and minds not capable of concentrating upon a more or less involved argument. Franklin taught himself to write prose by sedulously imitating Addison's *Spectator,* an odd volume of which he came across while he was still an apprentice. He shared with Washington Irving this indebtedness to the *Spectator* and both published many essays in the Addisonian manner. As we have seen, the widespread influence of Addison is one of the most striking phenomena in the development of the essay.

Since that time the essay has grown and flourished mightily upon American soil. We have all varieties from the criticism of Lowell to the humour of Mark Twain and George Ade, and from the inspiring discourses of Emerson to the delicate nature-sketches of John Burroughs. Circumstances have undoubtedly favoured the essay and at the same time have modified its form. As Dr. Bronson says, "Our ancestors had time to read *Clarissa Harlowe;* we live on the jump, and need something short enough to be read between jumps." That will explain the difference between Emerson and, say, George Ade or Christopher Morley.

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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

AMERICA has some marvellous stories to tell of men who have risen from humble beginnings to power and affluence, but none of them can surpass that of Benjamin Franklin, that printer's boy who became an ambassador and one of the most famous men of his day. He was born in Boston in 1706 and at the age of seventeen went to Philadelphia where he became a printer and publisher. He took an active interest in the life of the colony and both the American Philosophical Society and the University of Pennsylvania owe their origin to him. He achieved fame as a statesman, a scientist, and a man of letters. He assisted in drafting the Declaration of Independence and became ambassador to France in 1776-85. He died in 1790. His extensive literary works embody the sound common sense which characterized his conduct of affairs. His chief works are the famous *Autobiography* and *Poor Richard's Almanac.*

The first of the following extracts is taken from *Poor Richard's Almanac* for October, 1736.

I. HINTS FOR THOSE THAT WOULD BE RICH

THE Use of Money is all the Advantage there is in having Money. For £6 a Year you may have the Use of £100 if you are a Man of known Prudence and Honesty.

He that spends a Groat a day idly, spends idly above £6 a year, which is the Price of using £100.

He that wastes idly a Groat's worth of his Time per Day, one Day with another, wastes the Privilege of using £100 each Day.

He that idly loses 5*s*. worth of time, loses 5*s*. and might as prudently throw 5*s*. in the River.

He that loses 5*s*. not only loses that Sum, but all the Advantage that might be made by turning it in Dealing, which, by the time that a young Man becomes old, amounts to a comfortable Bag of Money.

Again, He that sells upon Credit, asks a Price for what he sells equivalent to the Principal and Interest of his Money for the Time he is like to be kept out of it: therefore He that buys upon Credit, pays Interest for what he buys. And he that pays ready Money, might let that Money out to Use; so that He that possesses any Thing he has bought, pays Interest for the Use of it.

Consider then when you are tempted to buy any unnecessary Householdstuff, or any superfluous thing, whether you will be willing to pay *Interest, and Interest upon Interest* for it as long as you live; and more if it grows worse by using.

Yet, in buying goods, 't is best to pay Ready Money, because, He that sells upon Credit, expects to lose *5 per Cent.* by bad Debts; therefore he charges, on all he sells upon Credit, an Advance that shall make up that Deficiency.

Those who pay for what they buy upon Credit, pay their Share of this Advance.

He that pays ready Money, escapes or may escape that Charge.

A Penny sav'd is Twopence clear,
A Pin a Day is a Groat a Year.

II. THE WHISTLE

(From a Letter to Madame Brillon, Written in Passy, November 10, 1779)

WHEN I was a child of seven years old, my friends, on a holiday, filled my pockets with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle,* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I

voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle,* but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money; and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

This however was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind; so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle;* and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

When I saw one too ambitious of court favour, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship, for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man,* said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporeal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man,* said I, *you are providing pain for yourself, instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.*

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity,* say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.*

Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider, that, with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in this world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put

to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle.*

* * *

WASHINGTON IRVING

Born in New York City in 1783 of a Scottish father and English mother, Washington Irving began to study law in 1799. His health being far from robust, however, his brothers sent him to Europe, and he found himself quite at home in the learned and artistic circles of France, Italy, and England. After a period spent at home in desultory literary work he travelled again in Europe from 1815 to 1832. When his brothers became bankrupt in 1818 he first set himself seriously to earn money by his pen. *The Sketch Book,* which secured immediate favour, proved very lucrative, and he spent a long time gathering material for his volumes on Spanish history. After seventeen years he returned with the idea of spending the remainder of his life at home, but from 1842-6 he went back as Minister to Spain. He died in 1859. His writings include *A History of New York, The Sketch Book, Bracebridge Hall, A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada, Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus, The Alhambra, Oliver Goldsmith,* and *The Life of George Washington.*

The following essay has been taken from *The Sketch Book.*

CHRISTMAS EVE

Saint Francis and Saint Benedight
Blesse this house from wicked wight;
From the night-mare and the goblin,
That is hight good fellow Robin:
Keep it from all evil spirits,
Fairies, weezels, rats and ferrets:
From curfew time
To the next prime. —Cartwright

IT WAS a brilliant moonlight night, but extremely cold; our chaise whirled rapidly over the frozen ground; the postboy smacked his whip incessantly, and a part of the time his horses were on a gallop. "He knows where he is going," said my companion, laughing, "and is eager to arrive in time for some of the merriment and good cheer of the servants' hall. My father, you must know, is a bigoted devotee of the old school, and prides himself upon keeping up something of old English hospitality. He is a tolerable specimen of what you will rarely meet with nowadays in its purity, the old English country gentleman;

for our men of fortune spend so much of their time in town, and fashion is carried so much into the country, that the strong rich peculiarities of ancient rural life are almost polished away. My father, however, from early years, took honest Peacham for his text-book, instead of Chesterfield; he determined, in his own mind, that there was no condition more truly honourable and enviable than that of a country gentleman on his paternal lands, and therefore passes the whole of his time on his estate. He is a strenuous advocate for the revival of the old rural games and holiday observances, and is deeply read in the writers, ancient and modern, who have treated on the subject. Indeed, his favourite range of reading is among the authors who flourished at least two centuries since; who, he insists, wrote and thought more like true Englishmen than any of their successors. He even regrets sometimes that he had not been born a few centuries earlier, when England was itself, and had its peculiar manners and customs. As he lives at some distance from the main road, in rather a lonely part of the country, without any rival gentry near him, he has that most enviable of all blessings to an Englishman, an opportunity of indulging the bent of his own humour without molestation. Being representative of the oldest family in the neighbourhood, and a great part of the peasantry being his tenants, he is much looked up to, and, in general, is known simply by the appellation of "The Squire"; a title which has been accorded to the head of the family since time immemorial. I think it best to give you these hints about my worthy old father, to prepare you for any eccentricities that might otherwise appear absurd."

We had passed for some time along the wall of a park, and at length the chaise stopped at the gate. It was in a heavy magnificent old style, of iron bars, fancifully wrought at top into flourishes and flowers. The huge square columns that supported the gate were surmounted by the family crest. Close adjoining was the porter's lodge, sheltered under dark fir-trees, and almost buried in shrubbery.

The postboy rang a large porter's bell, which resounded through the still frosty air, and was answered by the distant barking of dogs, with which the mansion-house seemed garrisoned. An old woman immediately appeared at the gate. As the moonlight fell strongly upon her, I had a full view of a little primitive dame, dressed very much in the antique taste, with a neat kerchief and stomacher, and her silver hair peeping from under a cap of snowy whiteness. She came curtseying forth, with many expressions of simple joy at seeing her young master. Her husband, it semed, was up at the house keeping Christmas eve in the servants' hall; they could not do without him, as he was the best hand at a song and story in the household.

My friend proposed that we should alight and walk through the park to the hall, which was at no great distance, while the chaise should follow on. Our road wound through a noble avenue of trees, among

the naked branches of which the moon glittered as she rolled through the deep vault of a cloudless sky. The lawn beyond was sheeted with a slight covering of snow, which here and there sparkled as the moonbeams caught a frosty crystal; and at a distance might be seen a thin transparent vapour stealing up from the low grounds and threatening gradually to shroud the landscape.

My companion looked around him with transport: "How often," said he, "have I scampered up this avenue, on returning home on school vacations! How often have I played under these trees when a boy! I feel a degree of filial reverence for them, as we look up to those who have cherished us in childhood. My father was always scrupulous in exacting our holidays, and having us around him on family festivals. He used to direct and superintend our games with the strictness that some parents do the studies of their children. He was very particular that we should play the old English games according to their original form; and consulted old books for precedent and authority for every "merrie disport"; yet I assure you that there never was pedantry so delightful. It was the policy of the good old gentleman to make his children feel that home was the happiest place in the world, and I value this delicious home-feeling as one of the choicest gifts a parent could bestow."

We were interrupted by the clamour of a troop of dogs of all sorts and sizes, "mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound, and curs of low degree" that, disturbed by the ring of the porter's bell, and the rattling of the chaise, came bounding, open-mouthed, across the lawn.

> . . . The little dogs and all,
> Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart—see, they bark at me!

cried Bracebridge, laughing. At the sound of his voice, the bark was changed into a yelp of delight, and in a moment he was surrounded and almost overpowered by the caresses of the faithful animals.

We had now come in full view of the old family mansion, partly thrown in deep shadow, and partly lit up by the cold moonshine. It was an irregular building, of some magnitude, and seemed to be of the architecture of different periods. One wing was evidently very ancient, with heavy stone-shafted bow-windows, jutting out and overrun with ivy, from among the foliage of which the small diamond-shaped panes of glass glittered with the moonbeams. The rest of the house was in the French taste of Charles the Second's time, having been repaired and altered, as my friend told me, by one of his ancestors, who returned with that monarch at the Restoration. The grounds about the house were laid out in the old formal manner of artificial flower-beds, clipped shrubberies, raised terraces, and heavy stone balustrades, ornamented with urns, a leaden statue or two, and a jet of water. The old gentleman, I was told, was extremely careful to

preserve this obsolete finery in all its original state. He admired this fashion in gardening: it had an air of magnificence, was courtly and noble, and befitting good old family style. The boasted imitation of nature in modern gardening had sprung up with modern republican notions, but did not suit a monarchical government; it smacked of the levelling system. I could not help smiling at this introduction of politics into gardening, though I expressed some apprehension that I should find the old gentleman rather intolerant in his creed. Frank assured me, however, that it was almost the only instance in which he had ever heard his father meddle with politics; and he believed that he had got this notion from a member of Parliament who once passed a few weeks with him. The squire was glad of any argument to defend his clipt yew trees and formal terraces, which had been occasionally attacked by modern landscape-gardeners.

As we approached the house, we heard the sound of music, and now and then a burst of laughter from one end of the building. This, Bracebridge said, must proceed from the servants' hall, where a great deal of revelry was permitted, and even encouraged by the squire, throughout the twelve days of Christmas, provided everything was done conformably to ancient usage. Here were kept up the old games of hoodman blind, shoe the wild mare, hot cockles, steal the white loaf, bob apple, and snap dragon: the Yule clog and Christmas candle were regularly burnt, and the mistletoe, with its white berries, hung up, to the imminent peril of all the pretty housemaids.

So intent were the servants upon their sports, that we had to ring repeatedly before we could make ourselves heard. On our arrival being announced, the squire came out to receive us, accompanied by his two other sons; one a young officer in the army, home on leave of absence; the other an Oxonian, just from the University. The squire was a fine healthy-looking old gentleman, with silver hair curling lightly round an open florid countenance; in which the physiognomist, with the advantage, like myself, of a previous hint or two, might discover a singular mixture of whim and benevolence.

The family meeting was warm and affectionate: as the evening was far advanced, the squire would not permit us to change our travelling dress, but ushered us at once to the company, which was assembled in a large old-fashioned hall. It was composed of different branches of a numerous family connexion, where there were the usual proportion of old uncles and aunts, comfortably married dames, superannuated spinsters, blooming country cousins, half-fledged striplings, and bright-eyed boarding-school hoydens. They were variously occupied; some at a round game of cards; others conversing around the fireplace; at one end of the hall was a group of the young folks, some nearly grown up, others of a more tender and budding age, fully engrossed by a merry game; and a profusion of wooden horses, penny trumpets,

and tattered dolls, about the floor, showed traces of a troop of little fairy beings, who, having frolicked through a happy day, had been carried off to slumber through a peaceful night.

While the mutual greetings were going on between young Bracebridge and his relatives, I had time to scan the apartment. I have called it a hall, for so it had certainly been in old times, and the squire had evidently endeavoured to restore it to something of its primitive state. Over the heavy projecting fireplace was suspended a picture of a warrior in armour, standing by a white horse, and on the opposite wall hung a helmet, buckler, and lance. At one end an enormous pair of antlers were inserted in the wall, the branches serving as hooks on which to suspend hats, whips, and spurs; and in the corners of the apartment were fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, and other sporting implements. The furniture was of the cumbrous workmanship of former days, though some articles of modern convenience had been added, and the oaken floor had been carpeted; so that the whole presented an odd mixture of parlour and hall.

The grate had been removed from the wide overwhelming fireplace, to make way for a fire of wood, in the midst of which was an enormous log glowing and blazing, and sending forth a vast volume of light and heat; this I understood was the Yule clog, which the squire was particular in having brought in and illumined on a Christmas eve, according to ancient custom.

It was really delightful to see the old squire seated in his hereditary elbow chair, by the hospitable fireside of his ancestors, and looking round him like the sun of a system, beaming warmth and gladness to every heart. Even the very dog that lay stretched at his feet, as he lazily shifted his position and yawned, would look fondly up in his master's face, wag his tail against the floor, and stretch himself again to sleep, confident of kindness and protection. There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease. I had not been seated many minutes by the comfortable hearth of the worthy old cavalier, before I found myself as much at home as if I had been one of the family.

Supper was announced shortly after our arrival. It was served up in a spacious oaken chamber, the panels of which shone with wax, and around which were several family portraits decorated with holly and ivy. Besides the accustomed lights, two great wax tapers, called Christmas candles, wreathed with greens, were placed on a highly-polished beaufet among the family plate. The table was abundantly spread with substantial fare; but the squire made his supper of frumenty, a dish made of wheat cakes boiled in milk, with rich spices, being a standing dish in old times for Christmas-eve. I was happy to find my old friend, minced pie, in the retinue of the feast; and finding him

to be perfectly orthodox, and that I need not be ashamed of my predilection, I greeted him with all the warmth wherewith we usually greet an old and very genteel acquaintance.

The mirth of the company was greatly promoted by the humours of an eccentric personage whom Mr. Bracebridge always addressed with the quaint appellation of Master Simon. He was a tight brisk little man, with the air of an arrant old bachelor. His nose was shaped like the bill of a parrot; his face slightly pitted with the small-pox, with a dry perpetual bloom on it, like a frost-bitten leaf in autumn. He had an eye of great quickness and vivacity, with a drollery and lurking waggery of expression that was irresistible. He was evidently the wit of the family, dealing very much in sly jokes and innuendoes with the ladies, and making infinite merriment by harping upon old themes; which, unfortunately, my ignorance of the family chronicles did not permit me to enjoy. It seemed to be his great delight during supper to keep a young girl next him in a continual agony of stifled laughter, in spite of her awe of the reproving looks of her mother who sat opposite. Indeed, he was the idol of the younger part of the company, who laughed at everything he said or did, and at every turn of his countenance. I could not wonder at it; for he must have been a miracle of accomplishments in their eyes. He could imitate Punch and Judy; make an old woman of his hand, with the assistance of a burnt cork and pocket-handkerchief; and cut an orange into such a ludicrous caricature, that the young folks were ready to die with laughing.

I was left briefly into his history by Frank Bracebridge. He was an old bachelor, of a small independent income, which, by careful management, was sufficient for all his wants. He revolved through the family system like a vagrant comet in its orbit; sometimes visiting one branch, and sometimes another quite remote; as is often the case with gentlemen of extensive connexions and small fortunes in England. He had a chirping, buoyant disposition, always enjoying the present moment; and his frequent change of scene and company prevented his acquiring those rusty unaccommodating habits with which old bachelors are so uncharitably charged. He was a complete family chronicle, being versed in the genealogy, history, and intermarriages of the whole house of Bracebridge, which made him a great favourite with the old folks; he was the beau of all the elder ladies and superannuated spinsters, among whom he was habitually considered rather a young fellow, and he was master of the revels among the children; so that there was not a more popular being in the sphere in which he moved than Mr. Simon Bracebridge. Of late years he had resided almost entirely with the squire, to whom he had become a factotum, and whom he particularly delighted by jumping with his humour in respect to old times, and by having a scrap of an old song to suit every occasion.

We had presently a specimen of his last-mentioned talent, for no sooner was supper removed, and spiced wines and other beverages peculiar to the season introduced, than Master Simon was called on for a good old Christmas song. He bethought himself for a moment, and then, with a sparkle of the eye, and a voice that was by no means bad, excepting that it ran occasionally into a falsetto, like the notes of a split reed, he quavered forth a quaint old ditty.

Now Christmas is come,
Let us beat up the drum,
And call all our neighbours together,
And when they appear
Let us make them such cheer,
As will keep out the wind and the weather, &c.

The supper had disposed every one to gaiety, and an old harper was summoned from the servants' hall, where he had been strumming all the evening, and to all appearance comforting himself with some of the squire's home-brewed. He was a kind of hanger-on, I was told, of the establishment, and, though ostensibly a resident of the village, was oftener to be found in the squire's kitchen than his own home, the old gentleman being fond of the sound of "harp in hall."

The dance, like most dances after supper, was a merry one; some of the older folks joined in it, and the squire himself figured down several couple with a partner, with whom he affirmed he had danced at every Christmas for nearly half a century. Master Simon, who seemed to be a kind of connecting link between the old times and the new, and to be withal a little antiquated in the taste of his accomplishments, evidently piqued himself on his dancing, and was endeavouring to gain credit by the heel and toe, rigadoon, and other graces of the ancient school; but he had unluckily assorted himself with a little romping girl from boarding-school, who, by her wild vivacity, kept him continually on the stretch, and defeated all his sober attempts at elegance:—such are the ill-assorted matches to which antique gentlemen are unfortunately prone!

The young Oxonian, on the contrary, had led out one of his maiden aunts, on whom the rogue played a thousand little knaveries, with impunity; he was full of practical jokes, and his delight was to tease his aunts and cousins; yet, like all madcap youngsters, he was a universal favourite among the women. The most interesting couple in the dance was the young officer and a ward of the squire's, a beautiful blushing girl of seventeen. From several shy glances which I had noticed in the course of the evening, I suspected there was a little kindness growing up between them; and, indeed, the young soldier was just the hero to captivate a romantic girl. He was tall, slender, and

handsome, and like most young British officers of late years had picked up various small accomplishments on the Continent—he could talk French and Italian—draw landscapes—sing very tolerably—dance divinely; but, above all, he had been wounded at Waterloo:—what girl of seventeen, well read in poetry and romance, could resist such a mirror of chivalry and perfection!

The moment the dance was over, he caught up a guitar, and lolling against the old marble fireplace, in an attitude which I am half inclined to suspect was studied, began the little French air of the Troubadour. The squire, however, exclaimed against having anything on Christmas eve but good old English; upon which the young minstrel, casting up his eye for a moment, as if in an effort of memory, struck into another strain, and, with a charming air of gallantry, gave Herrick's "Night-Piece to Julia."

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee,
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-the-Wisp mislight thee;
Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee;
But on, on thy way,
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there is none to affright thee.

Then let not the dark thee cumber;
What tho' the moon does slumber,
The stars of the night
Will lend thee their light,
Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me,
And when I shall meet
Thy silvery feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee.

The song might or might not have been intended in compliment to the fair Julia, for so I found his partner was called; she, however, was certainly unconscious of any such application, for she never looked at the singer, but kept her eyes cast upon the floor. Her face was suffused, it is true, with a beautiful blush, and there was a gentle heaving of the bosom, but all that was doubtless caused by the exercise of the dance; indeed, so great was her indifference, that she amused herself with plucking to pieces a choice bouquet of hothouse flowers,

and by the time the song was concluded the nosegay lay in ruins on the floor.

The party now broke up for the night, with the kindhearted old custom of shaking hands. As I passed through the hall, on my way to my chamber, the dying embers of the Yule clog still sent forth a dusky glow, and had it not been the season when "no spirit dares stir abroad," I should have been half tempted to steal from my room at midnight, and peep whether the fairies might not be at their revels about the hearth.

My chamber was in the old part of the mansion, the ponderous furniture of which might have been fabricated in the days of the giants. The room was panelled with cornices of heavy carved work, in which flowers and grotesque faces were strangely intermingled; and a row of black-looking portraits stared mournfully at me from the walls. The bed was of rich though faded damask, with a lofty tester, and stood in a niche opposite a bow-window. I had scarcely got into bed when a strain of music seemed to break forth in the air just below the window. I listened, and found it proceeded from a band, which I concluded to be the waits from some neighbouring village. They went round the house, playing under the windows. I drew aside the curtains to hear them more distinctly. The moonbeams fell through the upper part of the casement, partially lighting up the antiquated apartment. The sounds, as they receded, became more soft and aerial, and seemed to accord with the quiet and moonlight. I listened and listened—they became more and more tender and remote, and, as they gradually died away, my head sunk upon the pillow, and I fell asleep.

* * *

R. W. EMERSON

Ralph Waldo Emerson was born in 1803. After a course at Harvard that lacked any particular distinction he became a schoolmaster and then a Unitarian minister. He resigned his pastorate because of certain doctrinal difficulties and then found his true vocation as a lecturer. The vogue of the lecture had just begun and Emerson was easily the first of those who regularly toured the country. He lacked the more showy qualities of some of his competitors, but his winning personality and stirring message drew all manner of men to listen in rapt attention to his discourse. The keynote of his lectures was self-reliance. It was a doctrine of supreme value to a comparatively youthful country which had hitherto felt very keenly a sense of dependence upon Europe. Emerson visited Europe on several occasions and struck up a deep and lasting friendship with Carlyle. He was received everywhere with acclamation. He died at Concord in 1882. His works include poems, several volumes of essays, *Repre-*

sentative Men, English Traits, Conduct of Life, and *Society and Solitude.*

COMPENSATION

EVER since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation; for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject Life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep; for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm, and the dwelling-house; the greetings, the relations, the debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me also that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the Soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition; and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared moreover that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey, that would not suffer us to lose our way.

I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offence appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was, "We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now";—or, to push it to its extreme import—"You sin

now, we shall sin by-and-by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful we expect our revenge to-morrow."

The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the Presence of the Soul; the omnipotence of the Will; and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood, and summoning the dead to its present tribunal.

I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. But men are better than this theology. Their daily life gives it the lie. Every ingenuous and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience, and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

I shall attempt in this and the following chapter to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

POLARITY, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light, in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals; in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the undulations of fluids and of sound; in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle, the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as, spirit, matter; man, woman; subjective, objective; in, out; upper, under; motion, rest; yea, nay.

Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist has observed that no creatures are

favourites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

The theory of the mechanic forces is another example. What we gain in power is lost in time, and the converse. The periodic or compensating errors of the planets is another instance. The influences of climate and soil in political history are another. The cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers, or scorpions.

The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some levelling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society and by temper and position a bad citizen—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him?—nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smoothes his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in and keeps her balance true.

The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the responsibility of overlooking. With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires

and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration and afflict them by faithfulness to his truth and become a byword and a hissing.

This Law writes the laws of the cities and nations. It will not be baulked of its end in the smallest iota. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things refuse to be mismanaged long. *Res nolunt diu male administrari.* Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. Nothing arbitrary, nothing artificial can endure. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigours or felicities of condition and to establish themselves with great indifferency under all varieties of circumstance. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same—in Turkey and New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies, and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction, is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of human life; of its good and ill, its trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man and recite all his destiny.

The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the force, so the limitation.

Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspirations; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. It is almighty. All nature feels its grasp. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it." It is eternal but it enacts itself in time and space. Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. Οἱ κύβοι Διὸς ἀεὶ εὐπίπτουσι. The dice of God are always loaded. The

world looks like a multiplication-table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates itself, in a twofold manner: first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The casual retribution is in the thing and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offence, but they follow because they accompany it. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

Whilst thus the world will be whole and refuses to be disparted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example—to gratify the senses we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has been dedicated to the solution of one problem—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, etc., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair; that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless; to get a *one end,* without an *other end.* The soul says, Eat; the body would feast. The soul says, The man and woman shall be one flesh and one soul; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue; the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgle for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. They think that to be great is to get only one side of nature—the sweet, without the other side—the bitter.

Steadily is this dividing and detaching counteracted. Up to this day it must be owned no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water reunites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of

pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, the moment we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light, without a shadow. "Drive out nature with a fork, she comes running back."

Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know, brags that they do not touch him—but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the tax, that the experiment would not be tried—since to try it is to be mad—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurement of an object and not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail, and thinks he can cut off that which he would have from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!" [1]

The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind; but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to Reason by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England. Prometheus knows one secret which Jove must bargain for; Minerva, another. He cannot get his own thunders; Minerva keeps the key of them:

> Of all the gods, I only know the keys
> That ope the solid doors within whose vaults
> His thunders sleep.

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and of its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics; and indeed it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral. Aurora forgot to ask youth for her lover, and so though Tithonus is immortal, he is old. Achilles is not quite invulnerable; for Thetis held him by the heel when she dipped him in the Styx and the sacred waters did not wash that part. Siegfried, in the Nibelungen, is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the Dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered

[1] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Bk. I.

is mortal. And so it always is. There is a crack in everything God has made. Always it would seem there is this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws—this back-stroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, all things are sold.

This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the Universe and lets no offence go unchastised. The Furies they said are attendants on Justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theogenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it; that is the best part of each which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrasses when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakespeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of Reason, or the statements of an absolute truth without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the Intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate, and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and all languages by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

All things are double, one against another. Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love.—Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself.—What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and

take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The devil is an ass.

It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will or against his will he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a threadball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or, rather, it is a harpoon thrown at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in the boat, and, if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke. The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and ninepins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by Fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow man, I have no pleasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is no good for him, my neighbour feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

All the old abuses in society, the great and universal and the petty and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he always teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and

property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloudless noon, the emerald of Polycrates, the awe of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favours and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbour's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbour; and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbour's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is always the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base—and that is the one base thing in the universe—to receive favours and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

Labour is watched over by the same pitiless laws. Cheapest, says the prudent, is the dearest labour. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skilful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because

of the dual constitution of things, in labour as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labour is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labour cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the benefit, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power.

Human labour, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. Everywhere and always this law is sublime. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that everything has its price, and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get anything without its price, is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees ever implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkle on his chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop-bill as in the history of a state—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. There is no such thing as concealment. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clue. Always some damning circumstance transpires. The laws and substances of nature, water, snow, wind, gravitation, become penalties to the thief.

On the other hand the law holds with equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns every thing to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon, when he approached cast down their colours and

from enemies became friends, so do disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offence, poverty, prove benefactors.

> Winds blow and waters roll
> Strength to the brave and power and deity,
> Yet in themselves are nothing.

The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until first he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men until he has suffered from the one and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

Our strength grows out of our weakness. Not until we are pricked and stung and sorely shot at, awakens the indignation which arms itself with secret forces. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin, and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honied words of praise are spoken for me I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valour of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect, and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The

nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfilment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

The history of persecution is a history of endeavours to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonoured. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. The minds of men are at last aroused; reason looks out and and justifies her own and malice finds all her work in vain. It is the whipper who is whipped and the tyrant who is undone.

Thus do all things preach the indifferency of circumstances. The man is all. Everything has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifferency. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul *is*. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Existence, or God, is not a relation or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade on which as a back-ground the living universe paints itself forth; but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work, for it is not. It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far decreases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also; but, should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom; they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action I properly *am;* in a virtuous act I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge, none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses all limits. It affirms in man always an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

His life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, always of the *presence of the soul,* and not of its absence; the brave man is greater than the coward; the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is therefore no tax on the good of virtue, for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. All external good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labour which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example to find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new responsibility. I do not wish more external goods—neither possessions, nor honours, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard, "Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More and Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad and knows not well what to make of it. Almost he shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly

and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother and my brother is me. If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbours, I can get love; I can still receive; and he that loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the eternal nature of the soul to appropriate and make all things its own. Jesus and Shakespeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain. His virtue—is not that mine? His wit—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit. Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Evermore it is the order of nature to grow, and every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shellfish crawls out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house. In proportion to the vigour of the individual these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very loosely about him, becoming as it were a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is always seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates and of no settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of to-day scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapsed estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not co-operating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolators of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or re-create that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward for evermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the New; and so we walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the

moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighbourhoods of men.

* * *

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

Born in 1804, Hawthorne spent his early years after leaving college in writing stories for magazines. Then he took a position in the Boston Custom House, and later became surveyor of Customs. For a time he lived at Concord and made the acquaintance of Thoreau, Emerson, and Margaret Fuller, but though he consented to share in the Brook Farm experiment for a time, he was never enthusiastic about it. He visited England and Italy in 1859, and his health began to fail very soon after his return to America. He died in 1864. His writings include *Twice-told Tales*, *Mosses from an Old Manse* (from which the following essay is taken), *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *A Wonder Book*, *Tanglewood Tales*, *The Marble Faun*, and *Our Old Home*.

THE OLD MANSE

HAPPY the man who in a rainy day can betake himself to a huge garret, stored, like that of the Manse, with lumber that each generation has left behind it from a period before the revolution. Our garret was an arched hall, dimly illuminated through small and dusty windows; it was but a twilight at the best; and there were nooks, or rather caverns, of deep obscurity, the secrets of which I never learned, being too reverent of their dust and cobwebs. The beams and rafters, roughly hewn and with strips of bark still on them, and the rude masonry of the chimneys, made the garret look wild and uncivilized—an aspect unlike what was seen elsewhere in the quiet and decorous old house. But on one side there was a little whitewashed apart-

ment, which bore the traditionary title of the Saint's Chamber, because holy men in their youth had slept, and studied, and prayed there. With its elevated retirement, its one window, its small fire-place, and its closet convenient for an oratory, it was the very spot where a young man might inspire himself with solemn enthusiasm and cherish saintly dreams. The occupants, at various epochs, had left brief records and ejaculations inscribed upon the walls. There, too, hung a tattered and shrivelled roll of canvas, which on inspection proved to be the forcibly wrought picture of a clergyman, in wig, band, and gown, holding a Bible in his hand. As I turned his face towards the light he eyed me with an air of authority such as men of his profession seldom assume in our days. The original had been pastor of the parish more than a century ago, a friend of Whitefield, and almost his equal in fervid eloquence. I bowed before the effigy of the dignified divine, and felt as if I had now met face to face with the ghost by whom, as there was reason to apprehend, the Manse was haunted.

Houses of any antiquity in New England are so invariably possessed with spirits that the matter seems hardly worth alluding to. Our ghost used to heave deep sighs in a particular corner of the parlour, and sometimes rustled paper, as if he were turning over a sermon in the long upper entry—where nevertheless he was invisible, in spite of the bright moonshine that fell through the eastern window. Not improbably he wished me to edit and publish a selection from a chest full of manuscript discourses that stood in the garret. Once, while Hillard and other friends sat talking with us in the twilight, there came a rustling noise as of a minister's silk gown sweeping through the very midst of the company, so closely as almost to brush against the chairs. Still there was nothing visible. A yet stranger business was that of a ghostly servant maid, who used to be heard in the kitchen at deepest midnight, grinding coffee, cooking, ironing—performing, in short, all kinds of domestic labour—although no traces of anything accomplished could be detected the next morning. Some neglected duty of her servitude—some ill-starched ministerial band—disturbed the poor damsel in her grave and kept her at work without any wages.

But to return from this digression. A part of my predecessor's library was stored in the garret—no unfit receptacle indeed for such dreary trash as comprised the greater number of volumes. The old books would have been worth nothing at an auction. In this venerable garret, however, they possessed an interest, quite apart from their literary value, as heirlooms, many of which had been transmitted down through a series of consecrated hands from the days of the mighty Puritan divines. Autographs of famous names were to be seen in faded ink on some of their flyleaves; and there were marginal observations or interpolated pages closely covered with manuscript in illegible shorthand,

perhaps concealing matter of profound truth and wisdom. The world will never be the better for it. A few of the books were Latin folios, written by Catholic authors; others demolished Papistry, as with a sledge hammer, in plain English. A dissertation on the book of Job—which only Job himself could have had patience to read—filled at least a score of small, thickset quartos, at the rate of two or three volumes to a chapter. Then there was a vast folio body of divinity—too corpulent a body, it might be feared, to comprehend the spiritual element of religion. Volumes of this form dated back two hundred years or more, and were generally bound in black leather, exhibiting precisely such an appearance as we should attribute to books of enchantment. Others equally antique were of a size proper to be carried in the large waistcoat pockets of old times—diminutive, but as black as their bulkier brethren, and abundantly interfused with Greek and Latin quotations. These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted at an early stage of their growth.

The rain pattered upon the roof and the sky gloomed through the dusty garret windows while I burrowed among these venerable books in search of any living thought which should burn like a coal of fire or glow like an inextinguishable gem beneath the dead trumpery that had long hidden it. But I found no such treasure; all was dead alike; and I could not but muse deeply and wonderingly upon the humiliating fact that the works of man's intellect decay like those of his hands. Thought grows mouldy. What was good and nourishing food for the spirits of one generation affords no sustenance for the next. Books of religion, however, cannot be considered a fair test of the enduring and vivacious properties of human thought, because such books so seldom really touch upon their ostensible subject, and have, therefore, so little business to be written at all. So long as an unlettered soul can attain to saving grace there would seem to be no deadly error in holding theological libraries to be accumulations of, for the most part, stupendous impertinence.

Many of the books had accrued in the latter years of the last clergyman's lifetime. These threatened to be of even less interest than the elder works a century hence to any curious inquirer who should then rummage them as I was doing now. Volumes of the *Liberal Preacher* and *Christian Examiner,* occasional sermons, controversial pamphlets, tracts, and other productions of a like fugitive nature took the place of the thick and heavy volumes of past time. In a physical point of view, there was much the same difference as between a feather and a lump of lead; but, intellectually regarded, the specific gravity of old and new was about upon a par. Both also were alike frigid. The elder books nevertheless seemed to have been earnestly written, and might be conceived to have possessed warmth at some former period; al-

though, with the lapse of time, the heated masses had cooled down even to the freezing point. The frigidity of the modern productions, on the other hand, was characteristic and inherent, and evidently had little to do with the writer's qualities of mind and heart. In fine, of this whole dusty heap of literature I tossed aside all the sacred part, and felt myself none the less a Christian for eschewing it. There appeared no hope of either mounting to the better world on a Gothic staircase of ancient folios or of flying thither on the wings of a modern tract.

Nothing, strange to say, retained any sap except what had been written for the passing day and year without the remotest pretension or idea of permanence. There were a few old newspapers, and still older almanacs, which reproduced to my mental eye the epochs when they had issued from the press with a distinctness that was altogether unaccountable. It was as if I had found bits of magic looking-glass among the books with the images of a vanished century in them. I turned my eyes towards the tattered picture above mentioned, and asked of the austere divine wherefore it was that he and his brethren, after the most painful rummaging and groping into their minds, had been able to produce nothing half so real as these newspaper scribblers and almanac makers had thrown off in the effervescence of a moment. The portrait responded not; so I sought an answer for myself. It is the age itself that writes newspapers and almanacs, which therefore have a distinct purpose and meaning at the time, and a kind of intelligible truth for all times; whereas most other works—being written by men who, in the very act, set themselves apart from their age—are likely to possess little significance when new, and none at all when old. Genius, indeed, melts many ages into one, and thus effects something permanent, yet still with a similarity of office to that of the more ephemeral writer. A work of genius is but the newspaper of a century, or perchance of a hundred centuries.

Lightly as I have spoken of these old books, there yet lingers with me a superstitious reverence for literature of all kinds. A bound volume has a charm in my eyes similar to what scraps of manuscript possess for the good Mussulman. He imagines that those wind-wafted records are perhaps hallowed by some sacred verse; and I, that every new book or antique one may contain the "open sesame"—the spell to disclose treasures hidden in some unsuspected cave of Truth. Thus it was not without sadness that I turned away from the library of the Old Manse.

Blessed was the sunshine when it came again at the close of another stormy day, beaming from the edge of the western horizon; while the massive firmament of clouds threw down all the gloom it could, but served only to kindle the golden light into a more brilliant glow by the strongly contrasted shadows. Heaven smiled at the earth, so long unseen, from beneath its heavy eyelid. To-morrow for the hill tops and the wood paths.

Or it might be that Ellery Channing came up the avenue to join me in a fishing excursion on the river. Strange and happy times were those when we cast aside all irksome forms and straitlaced habitudes and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like the Indians or any less conventional race during one bright semicircle of the sun. Rowing our boat against the current, between wide meadows, we turned aside into the Assabeth. A more lovely stream than this, for a mile above its junction with the Concord, has never flowed on earth—nowhere, indeed, except to lave the interior regions of a poet's imagination. It is sheltered from the breeze by woods and a hillside; so that elsewhere there might be a hurricane, and here scarcely a ripple across the shaded water. The current lingers along so gently that the mere force of the boatman's will seems sufficient to propel his craft against it. It comes flowing softly through the midmost privacy and deepest heart of a wood which whispers it to be quiet; while the stream whispers back again from its sedgy borders, as if river and wood were hushing one another to sleep. Yes; the river sleeps along its course and dreams of the sky and of the clustering foliage, amid which fall showers of broken sunlight, imparting specks of vivid cheerfulness, in contrast with the quiet depth of the prevailing tint. Of all this scene, the slumbering river has a dream picture in its bosom. Which, after all, was the most real—the picture, or the original?—the objects palpable to our grosser senses, or their apotheosis in the stream beneath? Surely the disembodied images stand in closer relation to the soul. But both the original and the reflection had here an ideal charm; and, had it been a thought more wild, I could have fancied that this river had strayed forth out of the rich scenery of my companion's inner world; only the vegetation along its banks should then have had an Oriental character.

Gentle and unobstrusive as the river is, yet the tranquil woods seem hardly satisfied to allow it passage. The trees are rooted on the very verge of the water, and dip their pendent branches into it. At one spot there is a lofty bank, on the slope of which grow some hemlocks, declining across the stream with outstretched arms, as if resolute to take the plunge. In other places the banks are almost on a level with the water; so that the quiet congregation of trees set their feet in the flood, and are fringed with foliage down to the surface. Cardinal flowers kindle their spiral flames and illuminate the dark nooks among the shrubbery. The pond lily grows abundantly along the margin—that delicious flower, which, as Thoreau tells me, opens its virgin bosom to the first sunlight and perfects its being through the magic of that genial kiss. He has beheld beds of them unfolding in due succession as the sunrise stole gradually from flower to flower—a sight not to be hoped for unless when a poet adjusts his inward eye to a proper focus with the outward organ. Grape vines here and there twine themselves

around shrub and tree and hang their clusters over the water within reach of the boatman's hand. Oftentimes they unite two trees of alien race in an inextricable twine, marrying the hemlock and the maple against their will, and enriching them with a purple offspring of which neither is the parent. One of these ambitious parasites has climbed into the upper branches of a tall, white pine, and is still ascending from bough to bough, unsatisfied till it shall crown the tree's airy summit with a wreath of its broad foliage and a cluster of its grapes.

The winding course of the stream continually shut out the scene behind us and revealed as calm and lovely a one before. We glided from depth to depth, and breathed new seclusion at every turn. The shy kingfisher flew from the withered branch close at hand to another at a distance, uttering a shrill cry of anger or alarm. Ducks that had been floating there since the preceding eve were startled at our approach and skimmed along the glassy river, breaking its dark surface with a bright streak. The pickerel leaped from among the lilypads. The turtle, sunning itself upon a rock or at the root of a tree, slid suddenly into the water with a plunge. The painted Indian who paddled his canoe along the Assabeth three hundred years ago could hardly have seen a wilder gentleness displayed upon its banks and reflected in its bosom than we did. Nor could the same Indian have prepared his noontide meal with more simplicity. We drew up our skiff at some point where the overarching shade formed a natural bower, and there kindled a fire with the pine cones and decayed branches that lay strewn plentifully around. Soon the smoke ascended among the trees, impregnated with a savoury incense, not heavy, dull, and surfeiting, like the steam of cookery within doors, but sprightly and piquant. The smell of our feast was akin to the woodland odours with which it mingled: there was no sacrilege committed by our intrusion there: the sacred solitude was hospitable, and granted us free leave to cook and eat in the recess that was at once our kitchen and banqueting hall. It is strange what humble offices may be performed in a beautiful scene without destroying its poetry. Our fire, red gleaming among the trees, and we beside it, busied with culinary rites and spreading out our meal on a mossgrown log, all seemed in unison with the river gliding by and the foliage rustling over us. And, what was strangest, neither did our mirth seem to disturb the propriety of the solemn woods; although the hobgoblins of the old wilderness and the will-of-the-wisps that glimmered in the marshy places might have come trooping to share our table talk and have added their shrill laughter to our merriment. It was the very spot in which to utter the extremest nonsense or the profoundest wisdom, or that ethereal product of the mind which partakes of both, and may become one or the other, in correspondence with the faith and insight of the auditor.

So, amid sunshine and shadow, rustling leaves and sighing waters,

up gushed our talk like the babble of a fountain. The evanescent spray was Ellery's; and his, too, the lumps of golden thought that lay glimmering in the fountain's bed and brightened both our faces by the reflection. Could he have drawn out that virgin gold, and stamped it with the mint mark that alone gives currency, the world might have had the profit, and he the fame. My mind was the richer merely by the knowledge that it was there. But the chief profit of those wild days, to him and me, lay, not in any definite idea, not in any angular or rounded truth, which we dug out of the shapeless mass of problematical stuff, but in the freedom which we thereby won from all custom and conventionalism and fettering influences of man on man. We were so free to-day that it was impossible to be slaves again to-morrow. When we crossed the threshold of the house or trod the thronged pavements of a city, still the leaves of the trees that overhang the Assabeth were whispering to us, "Be free! be free!" Therefore along that shady river bank there are spots, marked with a heap of ashes and half-consumed brands, only less sacred in my remembrance than the hearth of a household fire.

And yet how sweet, as we floated homeward adown the golden river at sunset—how sweet was it to return within the system of human society, not as to a dungeon and a chain, but as to a stately edifice, whence we could go forth at will into statelier simplicity! How gently, too, did the sight of the Old Manse, best seen from the river, overshadowed with its willow and all environed about with the foliage of its orchard and avenue—how gently did its grey, homely aspect rebuke the speculative extravagances of the day! It had grown sacred in connexion with the artificial life against which we inveighed; it had been a home for many years in spite of all; it was my home too; and, with these thoughts, it seemed to me that all the artifice and conventionalism of life was but an impalpable thinness upon its surface, and that the depth below was none the worse for it. Once, as we turned our boat to the bank, there was a cloud, in the shape of an immensely gigantic figure of a hound, couched above the house, as if keeping guard over it. Gazing at this symbol, I prayed that the upper influences might long protect the institutions that had grown out of the heart of mankind.

If ever my readers should decide to give up civilized life, cities, houses, and whatever moral or material enormities in addition to these the perverted ingenuity of our race has contrived let it be in the early autumn. Then Nature will love him better than at any other season, and will take him to her bosom with a more motherly tenderness. I could scarcely endure the roof of the old house above me in those first autumnal days. How early in the summer, too, the prophecy of autumn comes! Earlier in some years than in others; sometimes even in the first weeks of July. There is no other feeling like what is

caused by this faint, doubtful, yet real perception—if it be not rather a foreboding—of the year's decay, so blessedly sweet and sad in the same breath.

Did I say that there was no feeling like it? Ah, but there is a half-acknowledged melancholy like to this when we stand in the perfected vigour of our life and feel that Time has now given us all his flowers, and that the next work of his never idle fingers must be to steal them one by one away.

I have forgotten whether the song of the cricket be not as early a token of autumn's approach as any other—that song which may be called an audible stillness; for though very loud and heard afar, yet the mind does not take note of it as a sound, so completely is its individual existence merged among the accompanying characteristics of the season. Alas for the pleasant summer time! In August the grass is still verdant on the hills and in the valleys; the foliage of the trees is as dense as ever and as green; the flowers gleam forth in richer abundance along the margin of the river and by the stone walls and deep among the woods; the days, too, are as fervid now as they were a month ago; and yet in every breath of wind and in every beam of sunshine we hear the whispered farewell and behold the parting smile of a dear friend. There is a coolness amid all the heat, a mildness in the blazing noon. Not a breeze can stir but it thrills us with the breath of autumn. A pensive glory is seen in the far, golden gleams, among the shadows of the trees. The flowers—even the brightest of them, and they are the most gorgeous of the year—have this gentle sadness wedded to their pomp, and typify the character of the delicious time each within itself. The brilliant cardinal flower has never seemed gay to me.

Still later in the season Nature's tenderness waxes stronger. It is impossible not to be fond of our mother now; for she is so fond of us! At other periods she does not make this impression on me, or only at rare intervals; but in those genial days of autumn, when she has perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing that was given her to do, then she overflows with a blessed superfluity of love. She has leisure to caress her children now. It is good to be alive and at such times. Thank Heaven for breath—yes, for mere breath—when it is made up of a heavenly breeze like this! It comes with a real kiss upon our cheeks; it would linger fondly around us if it might; but, since it must be gone, it embraces us with its whole kindly heart and passes onward to embrace likewise the next thing that it meets. A blessing is flung abroad and scattered far and wide over the earth, to be gathered up by all who choose. I recline upon the still unwithered grass and whisper to myself, "O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!" And it is the promise of a blessed

eternity; for our Creator would never have made such lovely days and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal. This sunshine is the golden pledge thereof. It beams through the gates of paradise and shows us glimpses far inward.

By and by, in a little time, the outward world puts on a drearer austerity. On some October morning there is a heavy hoarfrost on the grass and along the tops of the fences; and at sunrise the leaves fall from the trees of our avenue without a breath of wind, quietly descending by their own weight. All summer long they have murmured like the noise of waters; they have roared loudly while the branches were wrestling with the thunder gust; they have made music both glad and solemn; they have attuned my thoughts by their quiet sound as I paced to and fro beneath the arch of intermingling boughs. Now they can only rustle under my feet. Henceforth the grey parsonage begins to assume a larger importance, and draws to its fireside—for the abomination of the airtight stove is reserved till wintry weather—draws closer and closer to its fireside the vagrant impulses that had gone wandering about through the summer.

When summer was dead and buried the Old Manse became as lonely as a hermitage. Not that ever—in my time at least—it had been thronged with company; but, at no rare intervals, we welcomed some friend out of the dusty glare and tumult of the world, and rejoiced to share with him the transparent obscurity that was floating over us. In one respect our precincts were like the Enchanted Ground through which the pilgrim travelled on his way to the Celestial City. The guests, each and all, felt a slumberous influence upon them; they fell asleep in chairs, or took a more deliberate siesta on the sofa, or were seen stretched among the shadows of the orchard, looking up dreamily through the boughs. They could not have paid a more acceptable compliment to my abode nor to my own qualities as a host. I held it as a proof that they left their cares behind them as they passed between the stone gateposts at the entrance of our avenue, and that the so powerful opiate was the abundance of peace and quiet within and all around us. Others could give them pleasure and amusement or instruction—these could be picked up anywhere; but it was for me to give them rest—rest in a life of trouble. What better could be done for those weary and world-worn spirits?—for him whose career of perpetual action was impeded and harassed by the rarest of his powers and the richest of his acquirements?—for another who had thrown his ardent heart from earliest youth into the strife of politics, and now, perchance, began to suspect that one lifetime is too brief for the accomplishment of any lofty aim?—for her on whose feminine nature had been imposed the heavy gift of intellectual power, such as a strong

man might have staggered under, and with it the necessity to act upon the world?—in a word, not to multiply instances, what better could be done for anybody who came within our magic circle than to throw the spell of a tranquil spirit over him? And when it had wrought its full effect, then we dismissed him, with but misty reminiscences, as if he had been dreaming of us.

Were I to adopt a pet idea as so many people do, and fondle it in my embraces to the exclusion of all others, it would be, that the great want which mankind labours under at this present period is sleep. The world should recline its vast head on the first convenient pillow and take an agelong nap. It has gone distracted through a morbid activity, and while preternaturally wide awake, is nevertheless tormented by visions that seem real to it now, but would assume their true aspect and character were all things once set right by an interval of sound repose. This is the only method of getting rid of old delusions and avoiding new ones; of regenerating our race, so that it might in due time awake as an infant out of dewy slumber; of restoring to us the simple perception of what is right and the single-hearted desire to achieve it, both of which have long been lost in consequence of this weary activity of brain and torpor or passion of the heart that now afflict the universe. Stimulants, the only mode of treatment hitherto attempted, cannot quell the disease; they do but heighten the delirium.

Let not the above paragraph ever be quoted against the author; for, though tinctured with its modicum of truth, it is the result and expression of what he knew, while he was writing, to be but a distorted survey of the state and prospects of mankind. There were circumstances around me which made it difficult to view the world precisely as it exists; for, severe and sober as was the Old Manse, it was necessary to go but a little way beyond its threshold before meeting with stranger moral shapes of men than might have been encountered elsewhere in a circuit of a thousand miles.

These hobgoblins of flesh and blood were attracted thither by the widespreading influence of a great original thinker, who had his earthly abode at the opposite extremity of our village. His mind acted upon other minds of a certain constitution with wonderful magnetism, and drew many men upon long pilgrimages to speak with him face to face. Young visionaries—to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them—came to seek the clue that should guide them out of their self-involved bewilderment. Grey-headed theorists—whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron framework—travelled painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite the free spirit into their own thraldom. People that had lighted on a new thought or a thought that they fancied new came to Emerson, as the finder of a glittering gem hastens

to a lapidary, to ascertain its quality and value. Uncertain, troubled, earnest wanderers through the midnight of the moral world beheld his intellectual fire as a beacon burning on a hill top, and, climbing the difficult ascent, looked forth into the surrounding obscurity more hopefully than hitherto. The light revealed objects unseen before—mountains, gleaming lakes, glimpses of a creation among the chaos; but also, as was unavoidable, it attracted bats and owls and the whole host of night birds, which flapped their dusty wings against the gazer's eyes, and sometimes were mistaken for fowls of angelic feather. Such delusions always hover nigh whenever a beacon fire of truth is kindled.

For myself, there had been epochs of my life when I, too, might have asked of this prophet the master word that should solve me the riddle of the universe; but now, being happy, I felt as if there were no question to be put, and therefore admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness, but sought nothing from him as a philosopher. It was good, nevertheless, to meet him in the woodpaths, or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure, intellectual gleam diffused about his presence like the garment of a shining one; and he, so quiet, so simple, so without pretension, encountering each man alive as if expecting to receive more than he could impart. And, in truth, the heart of many an ordinary man had, perchance, inscriptions which he could not read. But it was impossible to dwell in his vicinity without inhaling more or less the mountain atmosphere of his lofty thought, which, in the brains of some people wrought a singular giddiness—new truth being as heady as new wine. Never was a poor little country village infested with such a variety of queer, strangely-dressed, oddly-behaved mortals, most of whom took upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simply bores of a very intense water. Such, I imagine is the invariable character of persons who crowd so closely about an original thinker as to draw in his unuttered breath and thus become imbued with a false originality. This triteness of novelty is enough to make any man of common sense blaspheme at all ideas of less than a century's standing, and pray that the world may be petrified and rendered immovable in precisely the worst moral and physical state that it ever yet arrived at, rather than be benefited by such schemes of such philosophers.

And now I begin to feel—and perhaps should have sooner felt—that we have talked enough of the Old Manse. Mine honoured reader, it may be, will vilify the poor author as an egotist for babbling through so many pages about a mossgrown country parsonage, and his life within its walls, and on the river, and in the woods, and the influences that wrought upon him from all these sources. My conscience, however, does not reproach me with betraying anything too sacredly individual to be revealed by a human spirit to its brother or sister spirit.

How narrow—how shallow and scanty too—is the stream of thought that has been flowing from my pen, compared with the broad tide of dim emotions, ideas, and associations which swell around me from that portion of my existence! How little have I told! and of that little, how almost nothing is even tinctured with any quality that makes it exclusively my own! Has the reader gone wandering, hand in hand with me, through the inner passages of my being? and have we groped together into all its chambers and examined their treasures or their rubbish? Not so. We have been standing on the greensward, but just within the cavern's mouth, where the common sunshine is free to penetrate, and where every footstep is therefore free to come. I have appealed to no sentiment or sensibilities save such as are diffused among us all. So far as I am a man of really individual attributes I veil my face; nor am I, nor have I ever been, one of those supremely hospitable people who serve up their own hearts, delicately fried, with brain sauce, as a tidbit for their beloved public.

Glancing back over what I have written, it seems but the scattered reminiscences of a single summer. In fairyland there is no measurement of time; and, in a spot so sheltered from the turmoil of life's ocean, three years hastened away with a noiseless flight, as the breezy sunshine chases the cloud shadows across the depths of a still valley. Now came hints, growing more and more distinct, that the owner of the old house was pining for his native air. Carpenters next appeared, making a tremendous racket among the outbuildings, strewing the green grass with pine shavings and chips of chestnut joists and vexing the whole antiquity of the place with their discordant renovations. Soon, moreover, they divested our abode of the veil of woodbine which had crept over a large portion of its southern face. All the aged mosses were cleared unsparingly away; and there were horrible whispers about brushing up the external walls with a coat of paint—a purpose as little to my taste as might be that of rouging the venerable cheeks of one's grandmother. But the hand that renovates is always more sacrilegious than that which destroys. In fine, we gathered up our household goods, drank a farewell cup of tea in our pleasant little breakfast room—delicately fragrant tea, an unpurchasable luxury, one of the many angel gifts that had fallen like dew upon us—and passed forth between the tall stone gateposts as uncertain as the wandering Arabs where our tent might be pitched. Providence took me by the hand, and—an oddity of dispensation which, I trust, there is no irreverence in smiling at—has led me, as the newspapers announce while I am writing, from the Old Manse into a custom house. As a story-teller, I have often contrived strange vicissitudes for my imaginary personages, but none like this.

* * *

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Oliver Wendell Holmes was born in 1809. After a period spent in a Boston medical school he studied medicine in Paris, visiting Germany, England, and Italy. He began to practise medicine at Boston in 1836. He became professor of anatomy at Dartmouth College in 1839, at Harvard Medical School in 1847, and dean from 1847 to 1853. Very early in his career as a physician he achieved some notoriety as a wit which did not always help to increase his practice. Some grave folk thought that jokes ill consorted with the bedside manner. When, however, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* Holmes became famous. He died in 1894. His writings include *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (from which the following essay is taken), *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, *Elsie Venner*, *The Guardian Angel*, and *Our Hundred Days in Europe*—an account of a four months' tour undertaken when he was nearly eighty.

AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

I WAS just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2+2=4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a+b=c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity-student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original,* but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city who admired their teacher, and to some extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

Letters four do form his name—

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors, philanthropists, men of science, are, or ought to be, Societies of Mutual Admiration. A man of genius, or any kind of superiority, is not debarred from admiring the same quality in another, nor the other from returning his admiration. They may even associate together and continue to think highly of each other. And so of a dozen such men, if any one place is fortunate enough to hold so many. The being referred to above assumes several false premises. First, that men of talent necessarily hate each other. Secondly, that intimate knowledge or habitual association destroys our admiration of persons whom we esteemed highly at a distance. Thirdly, that a circle of clever fellows, who meet together to dine and have a good time, have signed a constitutional compact to glorify themselves and to put down him and the fraction of the human race not belonging to their number. Fourthly, that it is an outrage that he is not asked to join them.

Here the company laughed a good deal, and the old gentleman who sits opposite said, "That's it! that's it!"

I continued, for I was in the talking vein. As to clever people's hating each other, I think *a little* extra talent does sometimes make people jealous. They become irritated by perpetual attempts and failures, and it hurts their tempers and dispositions. Unpretending mediocrity is good, and genius is glorious; but a weak flavour of genius in an essentially common person is detestable. It spoils the grand neutrality of a commonplace character, as the rinsings of an unwashed wineglass spoil a draught of fair water. No wonder the poor fellow we spoke of, who always belongs to this class of slightly flavoured mediocrities, is puzzled and vexed by the strange sight of a dozen men of capacity working and playing together in harmony. He and his fellows are always fighting. With them familiarity naturally breeds contempt. If they ever praise each other's bad drawings, or broken-winded novels, or spavined verses, nobody ever supposed it was from admiration; it was simply a contract between themselves and a publisher or dealer.

If the Mutuals have really nothing among them worth admiring, that alters the question. But if they are men with noble powers and qualities, let me tell you, that, next to youthful love and family affections, there is no human sentiment better than that which unites the Societies of Mutual Admiration. And what would literature or art be without such associations? Who can tell what we owe to the Mutual Admiration Society of which Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher were members? Or to that of which Addison and Steele formed the centre, and which gave us the *Spectator?* Or to that where Johnson, and Goldsmith, and Burke, and Reynolds, and

Beauclerk, and Boswell, most admiring among all admirers, met together? Was there any great harm in the fact that the Irvings and Pauldings wrote in company? or any unpardonable cabal in the literary union of Verplanck and Bryant and Sands, and as many more as they chose to associate with them?

The poor creature does not know what he is talking about, when he abuses this noblest of institutions. Let him inspect its mysteries through the knot-hole he has secured, but not use that orifice as a medium for his popgun. Such a society is the crown of a literary metropolis; if a town has not material for it, and spirit and good feeling enough to organize it, it is a mere caravansary, fit for a man of genius to lodge in, but not to live in. Foolish people hate, and dread and envy such an association of men of varied powers and influence, because it is lofty, serene, impregnable, and, by the necessity of the case, exclusive. Wise ones are prouder of the title M.S.M.A. than of all their other honours put together.

All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called "facts." They are the brute beasts of the intellectual domain. Who does not know fellows that always have an ill-conditioned fact or two which they lead after them into decent company like so many bull-dogs, ready to let them slip at every ingenious suggestion, or convenient generalization, or pleasant fancy? I allow no "facts" at this table. What! Because bread is good and wholesome and necessary and nourishing, shall you thrust a crumb into my windpipe while I am talking? Do not these muscles of mine represent a hundred loaves of bread? and is not my thought the abstract of ten thousand of these crumbs of truth with which you would choke off my speech?

(The above remark must be conditioned and qualified for the vulgar mind. The reader will of course understand the precise amount of seasoning which must be added to it before he adopts it as one of the axioms of his life. The speaker disclaims all responsibility for its abuse in incompetent hands.)

This business of conversation is a very serious matter. There are men that it weakens one to talk with an hour more than a day's fasting would do. Mark this that I am going to say, for it is as good as a working professional man's advice, and costs you nothing: It is better to lose a pint of blood from your veins than to have a nerve tapped. Nobody measures your nervous force as it runs away, nor bandages your brain and marrow after the operation.

There are men of *esprit* who are excessively exhausting to some people. They are the talkers who have what may be called *jerky* minds. Their thoughts do not run in the natural order of sequence. They say bright things on all possible subjects, but their zigzags rack you to death. After a jolting half-hour with one of these jerky com-

panions, talking with a dull friend affords great relief. It is like taking the cat in your lap after holding a squirrel.

What a comfort a dull but kindly person is, to be sure, at times! A ground-glass shade over a gas-lamp does not bring more solace to our dazzled eyes than such a one to our minds.

"Do not dull people bore you?" said one of the lady-boarders—the same that sent me her autograph-book last week with a request for a few original stanzas, not remembering that *The Pactolian* pays me five dollars a line for every thing I write in its columns.

"Madam," said I, (she and the century were in their teens together,) "all men are bores, except when we want them. There never was but one man whom I would trust with my latch-key."

"Who might that favoured person be?"

"Zimmermann."

The men of genius that I fancy most have erectile heads like the cobra-di-capello. You remember what they tell of William Pinkney, the great pleader; how in his eloquent paroxysms the veins of his neck would swell and his face flush and his eyes glitter, until he seemed on the verge of apoplexy. The hydraulic arrangements for supplying the brain with blood are only second in importance to its own organization. The bulbous-headed fellows that steam well when they are at work are the men that draw big audiences and give us marrowy books and pictures. It is a good sign to have one's feet grow cold when he is writing. A great writer and speaker once told me that he often wrote with his feet in hot water; but for this, *all* his blood would have run into his head, as the mercury sometimes withdraws into the ball of a thermometer.

You don't suppose that my remarks made at this table are like so many postage-stamps, do you—each to be only once uttered? If you do, you are mistaken. He must be a poor creature that does not often repeat himself. Imagine the author of the excellent piece of advice, "Know thyself," never alluding to that sentiment again during the course of a protracted existence! Why, the truths a man carries about with him are his tools; and do you think a carpenter is bound to use the same plane but once to smooth a knotty board with, or to hang up his hammer after it has driven its first nail? I shall never repeat a conversation, but an idea often. I shall use the same types when I like, but not commonly the same stereotypes. A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times. It has come to you over a new route, by a new and express train of association.

Sometimes, but rarely, one may be caught making the same speech twice over, and yet be held blameless. Thus, a certain lecturer, after performing in an inland city, where dwells a *Littératrice* of note,

was invited to meet her and others over the social teacup. She pleasantly referred to his many wanderings in his new occupation. "Yes," he replied, "I am like the Huma, the bird that never lights, being always in the cars, as he is always on the wing." Years elapsed. The lecturer visited the same place once more for the same purpose. Another social cup after the lecture, and a second meeting with the distinguished lady. "You are constantly going from place to place," she said. "Yes," he answered, "I am like the Huma," and finished the sentence as before.

What horrors, when it flashed over him that he had made this fine speech, word for word, twice over! Yet it was not true, as the lady might perhaps have fairly inferred, that he had embellished his conversation with the Huma daily during the whole interval of years. On the contrary, he had never once thought of the odious fowl until the recurrence of precisely the same circumstances brought up precisely the same idea. He ought to have been proud of the accuracy of his mental adjustments. Given certain factors, and a sound brain should always evolve the same fixed product with the certainty of Babbage's calculating machine.

What a satire, by the way, is that machine on the mere mathematician! A Frankenstein-monster, a thing without brains and without heart, too stupid to make a blunder; that turns out results like a corn-sheller, and never grows any wiser or better, though it grind a thousand bushels of them!

I have an immense respect for a man of talents *plus* "the mathematics." But the calculating power alone should seem to be the least human of qualities, and to have the smallest amount of reason in it; since a machine can be made to do the work of three or four calculators, and better than any one of them. Sometimes I have been troubled that I had not a deeper intuitive apprehension of the relations of numbers. But the triumph of the ciphering hand-organ has consoled me. I always fancy I can hear the wheels clicking in a calculator's brain. The power of dealing with numbers is a kind of "detached lever" arrangement, which may be put into a mighty poor watch. I suppose it is about as common as the power of moving the ears voluntarily, which is a moderately rare endowment.

Little localized powers, and little narrow streaks of specialized knowledge, are things men are very apt to be conceited about. Nature is very wise; but for this encouraging principle how many small talents and little accomplishments would be neglected Talk about conceit as much as you like, it is to human character what salt is to the ocean; it keeps it sweet, and renders it endurable. Say rather it is like the natural unguent of the sea-fowl's plumage, which enables him to shed the rain that falls on him and the wave in which he dips. When one

has had *all* his conceit taken out of him, when he has lost *all* his illusions, his feathers will soon soak through, and he will fly no more.

"So you admire conceited people, do you?" said the young lady who has come to the city to be finished off for—the duties of life.

I am afraid you do not study logic at your school, my dear. It does not follow that I wish to be pickled in brine because I like a salt-water plunge at Nahant. I say that conceit is just as natural a thing to human minds as a centre is to a circle. But little-minded people's thoughts move in such small circles that five minutes' conversation gives you an arc long enough to determine their whole curve. An arc in the movement of a large intellect does not sensibly differ from a straight line. Even if it have the third vowel as its centre, it does not soon betray it. The highest thought, that is, is the most seemingly impersonal; it does not obviously imply any individual centre.

Audacious self-esteem, with good ground for it, is always imposing. What resplendent beauty that must have been which could have authorized Phryne to "peel" in the way she did! What fine speeches are those two: *"non omnis moriar,"* and "I have taken all knowledge to be my province"! Even in common people, conceit has the virtue of making them cheerful; the man who thinks his wife, his baby, his house, his horse, his dog, and himself severally unequalled, is almost sure to be a good-humoured person, though liable to be tedious at times.

What are the great faults of conversation? Want of ideas, want of words, want of manners, are the principal ones, I suppose you think. I don't doubt it, but I will tell you what I have found spoil more good talks than anything else; long arguments on special points between people who differ on the fundamental principles upon which these points depend. No men can have satisfactory relations with each other until they have agreed on certain *ultimata* of belief not to be disturbed in ordinary conversation, and unless they have sense enough to trace the secondary questions depending upon these ultimate beliefs to their source. In short, just as a written constitution is essential to the best social order, so a code of finalities is a necessary condition of profitable talk between two persons. Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hands on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.

Do you mean to say the pun-question is not clearly settled in your minds? Let me lay down the law upon the subject. Life and language are alike sacred. Homicide and *verbicide*—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning, which is its life—are alike forbidden. Manslaughter, which is the meaning of the one, is the same as man's laughter, which is the end of the other. A pun is *primâ facie* an insult to the person you are talking with. It implies

utter indifference to or sublime contempt for his remarks, no matter how serious. I speak of total depravity, and one says all that is written on the subject is deep raving. I have committed my self-respect by talking with such a person. I should like to commit him, but cannot, because he is a nuisance. Or I speak of geological convulsions, and he asks me what was the cosine of Noah's ark; also, whether the Deluge was not a deal huger than any modern inundation.

A pun does not commonly justify a blow in return. But if a blow were given for such cause, and death ensued, the jury would be judges both of the facts and of the pun, and might, if the latter were of an aggravated character, return a verdict of justifiable homicide. Thus, in a case lately decided before Miller, J., Doe presented Roe a subscription paper, and urged the claims of suffering humanity. Roe replied by asking, When charity was like a top? It was in evidence that Doe preserved a dignified silence. Roe then said, "When it begins to hum." Doe then—and not till then—struck Roe, and his head happening to hit a bound volume of the *Monthly Rag-bag and Stolen Miscellany*, intense mortification ensued, with a fatal result. The chief laid down his notions of the law to his brother justices, who unanimously replied, "Jest so." The chief rejoined that no man should jest so without being punished for it, and charged for the prisoner, who was acquitted, and the pun ordered to be burned by the sheriff. The bound volume was forfeited as a deodand, but not claimed.

People that make puns are like wanton boys that put coppers on the railroad tracks. They amuse themselves and other children, but their little trick may upset a freight train of conversation for the sake of a battered witticism.

* * *

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

James Russell Lowell was born in 1819 and went to Harvard in 1834. He studied law and, for a time, practised it, but found in writing for the magazines a more congenial occupation. He did some lecturing and became professor of French and Spanish at Harvard in 1855. For four years he edited *The Atlantic Monthly*. In 1877 he became Minister to Spain, and from 1880 to 1885 he came to England in the same capacity, doing yeoman service in cementing friendship and promoting a real understanding between the two countries. His sane criticism had previously shown "what service American culture may render to English letters when it has obtained an entirely independent point of view." Now, in the world of affairs, he performed a like service. He died in 1891. Among his writings are *Poems*, *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, *The Biglow Papers*, *Among My Books*, *My Study Windows* (from which the following essay is taken), and *The Old English Dramatists*.

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE

ONE of the most delightful books in my father's library was White's *Natural History of Selborne*. For me it has rather gained in charm with years. I used to read it without knowing the secret of the pleasure I found in it, but as I grow older I begin to detect some of the simple expedients of this natural magic. Open the book where you will, it takes you out of doors. In our broiling July weather one can walk out with this genially garrulous Fellow of Oriel, and find refreshment instead of fatigue. You have no trouble in keeping abreast of him as he ambles along on his hobby-horse, now pointing to a pretty view, now stopping to watch the motions of a bird or an insect, or to bag a specimen for the Honourable Daines Barrington or Mr. Pennant. In simplicity of taste and natural refinement he reminds one of Walton; in tenderness toward what he would have called the brute creation, of Cowper. I do not know whether his descriptions of scenery are good or not, but they have made me familiar with his neighbourhood. Since I first read him, I have walked over some of his favourite haunts, but I still see them through his eyes rather than by any recollection of actual and personal vision. The book has also the delightfulness of absolute leisure. Mr. White seems never to have had any harder work to do than to study the habits of his feathered fellow-townsfolk, or to watch the ripening of his peaches on the wall. His volumes are the journal of Adam in Paradise,

> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade.

It is positive rest only to look into that garden of his. It is vastly better than to—

> See great Diocletian walk
> In the Salonian garden's noble shade,

for thither ambassadors intrude to bring with them the noises of Rome, while here the world has no entrance. No rumour of the revolt of the American Colonies seems to have reached him. "The natural term of an hog's life" has more interest for him than that of an empire. Burgoyne may surrender and welcome; of what consequence is *that* compared with the fact that we can explain the odd tumbling of rooks in the air by their turning over "to scratch themselves with one claw"? All the couriers in Europe spurring rowel-deep make no stir in Mr. White's little Chartreuse; but the arrival of the house-martin a day earlier or later than last year is a piece of news worth sending express to all his correspondents.

Another secret charm of this book is its inadvertent humour, so much the more delicious because unsuspected by the author. How pleasant is his innocent vanity in adding to the list of the British, and still more of the Selbornian, *fauna!* I believe he would gladly have consented to be eaten by a tiger or a crocodile, if by that means the occasional presence within the parish limits of either of these anthropophagous brutes could have been established. He brags of no fine society, but is plainly a little elated by "having considerable acquaintance with a tame brown owl." Most of us have known our share of owls, but few can boast of intimacy with a feathered one. The great events of Mr. White's life, too, have that disproportionate importance which is always humorous. To think of his hands having actually been thought worthy (as neither Willoughby's nor Ray's were) to hold a stilted plover, the *Charadrius himantopus,* with no back toe, and therefore "liable, in speculation, to perpetual vacillations!" I wonder, by the way, if metaphysicians have no hind toes. In 1770 he makes the acquaintance in Sussex of "an old family tortoise," which had then been domesticated for thirty years. It is clear that he fell in love with it at first sight. We have no means of tracing the growth of his passion, but in 1780 we find him eloping with its object in a post-chaise. "The rattle and hurry of the journey so perfectly roused it that, when I turned it out in a border, it walked twice down to the bottom of my garden." It reads like a Court Journal: "Yesterday morning H. R. H. the Princess Alice took an airing of half an hour on the terrace of Windsor Castle." This tortoise might have been a member of the Royal Society, if he could have condescended to so ignoble an ambition. It had but just been discovered that a surface inclined at a certain angle with the plane of the horizon took more of the sun's rays. The tortoise had always known this (though he unostentatiously made no parade of it), and used accordingly to tilt himself up against the garden-wall in the autumn. He seems to have been more of a philosopher than even Mr. White himself, caring for nothing but to get under a cabbage-leaf when it rained, or the sun was too hot, and to bury himself alive before frost—a four-footed Diogenes, who carried his tub on his back.

There are moods in which this kind of history is infinitely refreshing. These creatures whom we affect to look down upon as the drudges of instinct are members of a commonwealth whose constitution rests on immovable bases. Never any need of reconstruction there! *They* never dream of settling it by vote that eight hours are equal to ten, or that one creature is as clever as another and no more. *They* do not use their poor wits in regulating God's clocks, nor think they cannot go astray so long as they carry their guide-board about with them—a delusion we often practise upon ourselves with our high and mighty reason, that admirable finger-post which points every way and

always right. It is good for us now and then to converse with a world like Mr. White's, where Man is the least important of animals. But one who, like me, has always lived in the country and always on the same spot, is drawn to his book by other occult sympathies. Do we not share his indignation at that stupid Martin who had graduated his thermometer no lower than 4° above zero of Fahrenheit, so that in the coldest weather ever known the mercury basely absconded into the bulb, and left us to see the victory slip through our fingers just as they were closing upon it? No man, I suspect, ever lived long in the country without being bitten by these meteorological ambitions. He likes to be hotter and colder, to have been more deeply snowed up, to have more trees and larger blown down than his neighbours. With us descendants of the Puritans especially, these weather competitions supply the abnegated excitement of the race-course. Men learn to value thermometers of the true imaginative temperament, capable of prodigious elations and corresponding dejections. The other day (July 5) I marked 98° in the shade, my high-water mark, higher by one degree than I have ever seen it before. I happened to meet a neighbour; as we mopped our brows at each other, he told me that he had just cleared 100°, and I went home a beaten man. I had not felt the heat before, save as a beautiful exaggeration of sunshine; but now it oppressed me with the prosaic vulgarity of an oven. What had been poetic intensity became all at once rhetorical hyperbole. I might suspect his thermometer (as indeed I did, for we Harvard men are apt to think ill of any graduation but our own); but it was a poor consolation. The fact remained that his herald Mercury, standing a-tiptoe, could look down on mine. I seem to glimpse something of this familiar weakness in Mr. White. He, too, has shared in these mercurial triumphs and defeats. Nor do I doubt that he had a true country-gentleman's interest in the weathercock; that his first question on coming down of a morning was, like Barabas's—

> Into what quarter peers my halcyon's bill?

It is an innocent and healthful employment of the mind, distracting one from too continual study of himself, and leading him to dwell rather upon the indigestions of the elements than his own. "Did the wind back ground, or go about with the sun?" is a rational question that bears not remotely on the making of hay and the prosperity of crops. I have little doubt that the regulated observation of the vane in many different places, and the interchange of results by telegraph, would put the weather, as it were, in our power, by betraying its ambushes before it is ready to give the assault. At first sight, nothing seems more drolly trivial than the lives of those whose single achievement is to record the wind and the temperature three times a day. Yet such men are doubtless sent into the world for this special end, and perhaps there is no

kind of accurate observation, whatever its object, that has not its final use and value for some one or other. It is even to be hoped that the speculations of our newspaper editors and their myriad correspondents upon the signs of the political atmosphere may also fill their appointed place in a well-regulated universe, if it be only that of supplying so many more jack-o'-lanterns to the future historian. Nay, the observations on finance of an M. C. whose sole knowledge of the subject has been derived from a lifelong success in getting a living out of the public without paying any equivalent therefor, will perhaps be of interest hereafter to some explorer of our *cloaca maxima,* whenever it is cleansed.

For many years I have been in the habit of noting down some of the leading events of my embowered solitude, such as the coming of certain birds and the like—a kind of *mémoires pour servir,* after the fashion of White, rather than properly digested natural history. I thought it not impossible that a few simple stories of my winged acquaintances might be found entertaining by persons of kindred taste.

There is a common notion that animals are better meteorologists than men, and I have little doubt that in immediate weather-wisdom they have the advantage of our sophisticated senses (though I suspect a sailor or shepherd would be their match), but I have seen nothing that leads me to believe their minds capable of erecting the horoscope of a whole season, and letting us know beforehand whether the winter will be severe or the summer rainless. I more than suspect that the clerk of the weather himself does not always know very long in advance whether he is to draw an order for hot or cold, dry or moist, and the musquash is scarce likely to be wiser. I have noted but two days' difference in the coming of the song-sparrow between a very early and a very backward spring. This very year I saw the linnets at work thatching, just before a snowstorm which covered the ground several inches deep for a number of days. They struck work and left us for a while, no doubt in search of food. Birds frequently perish from sudden changes in our whimsical spring weather of which they had no foreboding. More than thirty years ago, a cherry-tree, then in full bloom, near my window, was covered with humming-birds benumbed by a fall of mingled rain and snow, which probably killed many of them. It should seem that their coming was dated by the height of the sun, which betrays them into unthrifty matrimony;

> So nature pricketh them in their corages;

but their going is another matter. The chimney-swallows leave us early, for example, apparently so soon as their latest fledglings are firm enough of wing to attempt the long rowing-match that is before them. On the other hand, the wild-geese probably do not leave the North till they are frozen out, for I have heard their bugles sounding southward so late as the middle of December. What may be called

local migrations are doubtless dictated by the chances of food. I have once been visited by large flights of cross-bills; and whenever the snow lies long and deep on the ground, a flock of cedar-birds comes in midwinter to eat the berries on my hawthorns. I have never been quite able to fathom the local, or rather geographical partialities of birds. Never before this summer (1870) have the king-birds, handsomest of flycatchers, built in my orchard; though I always know where to find them within half a mile. The rose-breasted grosbeak has been a familiar bird in Brookline (three miles away), yet I never saw one here till last July, when I found a female busy among my raspberries, and surprisingly bold. I hope she was *prospecting* with a view to settlement in our garden. She seemed, on the whole, to think well of my fruit, and I would gladly plant another bed if it would help to win over so delightful a neighbour.

The return of the robin is commonly announced by the newspapers, like that of eminent or notorious people to a watering-place, as the first authentic notification of spring. And such his appearance in the orchard and garden undoubtedly is. But, in spite of his name of migratory thrush, he stays with us all winter, and I have seen him when the thermometer marked 15° below zero of Fahrenheit, armed impregnably within, like Emerson's Titmouse, and as cheerful as he. The robin has a bad reputation among people who do not value themselves less for being fond of cherries. There is, I admit, a spice of vulgarity in him, and his song is rather of the Bloomfield sort, too largely ballasted with prose. His ethics are of the Poor Richard school, and the main chance which calls forth all his energy is altogether of the belly. He never has those fine intervals of lunacy into which his cousins, the catbird and the mavis, are apt to fall. But for a' that, and twice as muckle's a' that, I would not exchange him for all the cherries that ever came out of Asia Minor. With whatever faults, he has not wholly forfeited that superiority which belongs to the children of nature. He has a finer taste in fruit than could be distilled from many successive committees of the Horticultural Society, and he eats with a relishing gulp not inferior to Dr. Johnson's. He feels and freely exercises his right of eminent domain. His is the earliest mess of green peas; his all the mulberries I had fancied mine. But if he gets also the lion's share of the raspberries, he is a great planter, and sows those wild ones in the woods that solace the pedestrian and give a momentary calm even to the jaded victims of the White Hills. He keeps a strict eye over one's fruit, and knows to a shade of purple when your grapes have cooked long enough in the sun. During the severe drought a few years ago, the robins wholly vanished from my garden. I neither saw nor heard one for three weeks. Meanwhile a small foreign grapevine, rather shy of bearing, seemed to find the dusty air congenial, and, dreaming perhaps of its sweet Argos across the sea, decked itself with

a score or so of fair bunches. I watched them from day to day till they should have secreted sugar enough from the sunbeams, and at last made up my mind that I would celebrate my vintage the next morning. But the robins too had somehow kept note of them. They must have sent out spies as did the Jews into the promised land, before I was stirring. When I went with my basket, at least a dozen of these winged vintagers bustled out from among the leaves, and alighting on the nearest trees interchanged some shrill remarks about me of a derogatory nature. They had fairly sacked the vine. Not Wellington's veterans made cleaner work of a Spanish town; not Federals or Confederates were ever more impartial in the confiscation of neutral chickens. I was keeping my grapes a secret to surprise the fair Fidele with, but the robins made them a profounder secret to her than I had meant. The tattered remnant of a single bunch was all my harvest-home. How paltry it looked at the bottom of my basket, as if a humming-bird had laid her egg in an eagle's nest! I could not help laughing; and the robins seemed to join heartily in the merriment. There was a native grape-vine close by, blue with its less refined abundance, but my cunning thieves preferred the foreign flavour. Could I tax them with want of taste?

The robins are not good solo singers, but their chorus, as, like primitive fire-worshippers, they hail the return of light and warmth to the world, is unrivalled. There are a hundred singing like one. They are noisy enough then, and sing, as poets should, with no afterthought. But when they come after cherries to the tree near my window, they muffle their voices, and their faint *pip, pip, pop!* sounds far away at the bottom of the garden, where they know I shall not suspect them of robbing the great black-walnut of its bitter-rinded store.[1] They are feathered Pecksniffs, to be sure, but then how brightly their breasts, that look rather shabby in the sunlight, shine in a rainy day against the dark green of the fringe-tree! After they have pinched and shaken all the life out of an earthworm, as Italian cooks pound all the spirit out of a steak, and then gulped him, they stand up in honest self-confidence, expand their red waistcoats with the virtuous air of a lobby member, and outface you with an eye that calmly challenges inquiry. "Do *I* look like a bird that knows the flavour of raw vermin? I throw myself upon a jury of my peers. Ask any robin if he ever ate anything less ascetic than the frugal berry of the juniper, and he will answer that his vow forbids him." Can such an open bosom cover such depravity? Alas, yes! I have no doubt his breast was redder at that very moment with the blood of my raspberries. On the whole, he is a doubtful friend in the garden. He makes his dessert of all kinds of berries, and is not averse from early pears. But when we

[1] The screech-owl, whose cry, despite his ill name, is one of the sweetest sounds in nature, softens his voice in the same way with the most beguiling mockery of distance.

remember how omnivorous he is, eating his own weight in an incredibly short time, and that Nature seems exhaustless in her invention of new insects hostile to vegetation, perhaps we may reckon that he does more good than harm. For my own part, I would rather have his cheerfulness and kind neighbourhood than many berries.

For his cousin, the catbird, I have a still warmer regard. Always a good singer, he sometimes nearly equals the brown thrush, and has the merit of keeping up his music later in the evening than any bird of my familiar acquaintance. Ever since I can remember, a pair of them have built in a gigantic syringa, near our front door, and I have known the male to sing almost uninterruptedly during the evenings of early summer till twilight duskened into dark. They differ greatly in vocal talent, but all have a delightful way of crooning over, and, as it were, rehearsing their song in an undertone, which makes their nearness always unobtrusive. Though there is the most trustworthy witness to the imitative propensity of this bird, I have only once, during an intimacy of more than forty years, heard him indulge it. In that case, the imitation was by no means so close as to deceive, but a free reproduction of the notes of some other birds, especially of the oriole, as a kind of variation in his own song. The catbird is as shy as the robin is vulgarly familiar. Only when his nest or his fledglings are approached does he become noisy and almost aggressive. I have known him to station his young in a thick cornel-bush on the edge of the raspberry-bed, after the fruit began to ripen, and feed them there for a week or more. In such cases he shows none of that conscious guilt which makes the robin contemptible. On the contrary, he will maintain his post in the thicket, and sharply scold the intruder who ventures to steal *his* berries. After all, his claim is only for tithes, while the robin will bag your entire crop if he gets a chance.

Dr. Watts's statement that "birds in their little nests agree," like too many others intended to form the infant mind, is very far from being true. On the contrary, the most peaceful relation of the different species to each other is that of armed neutrality. They are very jealous of neighbours. A few years ago, I was much interested in the house-building of a pair of summer yellow-birds. They had chosen a very pretty site near the top of a tall white lilac, within easy eye-shot of a chamber window. A very pleasant thing it was to see their little home growing with mutual help, to watch their industrious skill interrupted only by little flirts and snatches of endearment, frugally cut short by the common-sense of the tiny housewife. They had brought their work nearly to an end, and had already begun to line it with fern-down, the gathering of which demanded more distant journeys and longer absences. But, alas! the syringa, immemorial manor of the catbirds, was not more than twenty feet away, and these "giddy neighbours" had, as it appeared, been all along jealously watchful, though silent, witnesses

of what they deemed an intrusion of squatters. No sooner were the pretty mates fairly gone for a new load of lining, than

> To their unguarded nest these weasel Scots
> Came stealing.

Silently they flew back and forth, each giving a vengeful dab at the nest in passing. They did not fall-to and deliberately destroy it, for they might have been caught at their mischief. As it was, whenever the yellow-birds came back, their enemies were hidden in their own sight-proof bush. Several times their unconscious victims repaired damages, but at length, after counsel taken together, they gave it up. Perhaps, like other unlettered folk, they came to the conclusion that the Devil was in it, and yielded to the invisible persecutions of witchcraft.

The robins, by constant attacks and annoyances, have succeeded in driving off the blue-jays who used to build in our pines, their gay colours and quaint noisy ways making them welcome and amusing neighbours. I once had the chance of doing a kindness to a household of them, which they received with very friendly condescension. I had had my eye for some time upon a nest, and was puzzled by a constant fluttering of what seemed full-grown wings in it whenever I drew nigh. At last I climbed the tree, in spite of angry protests from the old birds against my intrusion. The mystery had a very simple solution. In building the nest, a long piece of packthread had been somewhat loosely woven in. Three of the young had contrived to entangle themselves in it, and had become full-grown without being able to launch themselves upon the air. One was unharmed; another had so tightly twisted the cord about its shank that one foot was curled up and seemed paralysed; the third, in its struggles to escape, had sawn through the flesh of the thigh and so much harmed itself that I thought it humane to put an end to its misery. When I took out my knife to cut their hempen bonds, the heads of the family seemed to divine my friendly intent. Suddenly ceasing their cries and threats, they perched quietly within reach of my hand, and watched me in my work of manumission. This, owing to the fluttering terror of the prisoners, was an affair of some delicacy; but ere long I was rewarded by seeing one of them fly away to a neighbouring tree, while the cripple, making a parachute of his wings, came lightly to the ground, and hopped off as well as he could with one leg, obsequiously waited on by his elders. A week later I had the satisfaction of meeting him in the pine-walk, in good spirits, and already so far recovered as to be able to balance himself with the lame foot. I have no doubt that in his old age he accounted for his lameness by some handsome story of a wound received at the famous Battle of the Pines, when our tribe, overcome by numbers, was driven from its ancient camping-ground. Of late years the jays have visited

us only at intervals; and in winter their bright plumage, set off by the snow, and their cheerful cry, are especially welcome. They would have furnished Æsop with a fable, for the feathered crest in which they seemed to take so much satisfaction is often their fatal snare. Country boys make a hole with their finger in the snow-crust just large enough to admit the jay's head, and, hollowing it out somewhat beneath, bait it with a few kernels of corn. The crest slips easily into the trap, but refuses to be pulled out again, and he who came to feast remains a prey.

Twice have the crow-blackbirds attempted a settlement in my pines, and twice have the robins, who claim a right of pre-emption, so successfully played the part of border-ruffians as to drive them away—to my great regret, for they are the best substitute we have for rooks. At Shady Hill (now, alas! empty of its so long loved household) they build by hundreds, and nothing can be more cheery than their creaking clatter (like a convention of old-fashioned tavern-signs) as they gather at evening to debate in mass meeting their windy politics, or to gossip at their tent-doors over the events of the day. Their port is grave, and their stalk across the turf as martial as that of a second-rate ghost in *Hamlet*. They never meddled with my corn, so far as I could discover.

For a few years I had crows, but their nests are an irresistible bait for boys, and their settlement was broken up. They grew so wonted as to throw off a great part of their shyness, and to tolerate my near approach. One very hot day I stood for some time within twenty feet of a mother and three children, who sat on an elm bough over my head, gasping in the sultry air, and holding their wings half-spread for coolness. All birds during the pairing season become more or less sentimental, and murmur soft nothings in a tone very unlike the grinding organ repetition and loudness of their habitual song. The crow is very comical as a lover, and to hear him trying to soften his croak to the proper Saint Preux standard has something the effect of a Mississippi boatman quoting Tennyson. Yet there are few things to my ear more melodious than his caw of a clear winter morning as it drops to you filtered through five hundred fathoms of crisp blue air. The hostility of all smaller birds makes the moral character of the crow, for all his deaconlike demeanour and garb, somewhat questionable. He could never sally forth without insult. The golden robins, especially, would chase him as far as I could follow with my eye, making him duck clumsily to avoid their importunate bills. I do not believe, however, that he robbed any nests hereabouts, for the refuse of the gas-works, which, in our free-and-easy community, is allowed to poison the river, supplied him with dead alewives in abundance. I used to watch him making his periodical visits to the salt-marshes and coming back with a fish in his beak to his young savages, who, no doubt, like it in that condition

which makes it savoury to the Kanakas and other corvine races of men.

Orioles are in great plenty with me. I have seen seven males flashing about the garden at once. A merry crew of them swing their hammocks from the pendulous boughs. During one of these latter years, when the canker-worms stripped our elms as bare as winter, these birds went to the trouble of rebuilding their unroofed nests, and chose for the purpose trees which are safe from those swarming vandals, such as the ash and the buttonwood. One year a pair (disturbed, I suppose, elsewhere) built a second nest in an elm, within a few yards of the house. My friend, Edward E. Hale, told me once that the oriole rejected from his web all strands of brilliant colour, and I thought it a striking example of that instinct of concealment noticeable in many birds, though it should seem in this instance that the nest was amply protected by its position from all marauders but owls and squirrels. Last year, however, I had the fullest proof that Mr. Hale was mistaken. A pair of orioles built on the lowest trailer of a weeping elm, which hung within ten feet of our drawing-room window, and so low that I could reach it from the ground. The nest was wholly woven and felted with ravellings of woollen carpet in which scarlet predominated. Would the same thing have happened in the woods? Or did the nearness of a human dwelling perhaps give the birds a greater feeling of security? They are very bold, by the way, in quest of cordage, and I have often watched them stripping the fibrous bark from a honeysuckle growing over the very door. But, indeed, all my birds look upon me as if I were a mere tenant at will, and they were landlords. With shame I confess it, I have been bullied even by a humming-bird. This spring, as I was cleansing a pear-tree of its lichens, one of these zigzagging blurs came purring toward me, couching his long bill like a lance, his throat sparkling with angry fire, to warn me off from a Missouri-currant whose honey he was sipping. And many a time he has driven me out of a flower-bed. This summer, by the way, a pair of these winged emeralds fastened their mossy acorn-cup upon a bough of the same elm which the orioles had enlivened the year before. We watched all their proceedings from the window through an opera-glass, and saw their two nestlings grow from black needles with a tuft of down at the lower end, till they whirled away on their first short experimental flights. They became strong of wing in a surprisingly short time, and I never saw them or the male bird after, though the female was regular as usual in her visits to our petunias and verbenas. I do not think it ground enough for a generalization, but in the many times when I watched the old birds feeding their young, the mother always alighted, while the father as uniformly remained upon the wing.

The bobolinks are generally chance visitors, tinkling through the garden in blossoming-time, but this year, owing to the long rains early

in the season, their favourite meadows were flooded, and they were driven to the upland. So I had a pair of them domiciled in my grass-field. The male used to perch in an apple-tree, then in full bloom, and, while I stood perfectly still close by, he would circle away, quivering round the entire field of five acres, with no break in his song, and settle down again among the blossoms, to be hurried away almost immediately by a new rapture of music. He had the volubility of an Italian charlatan at a fair, and, like him, appeared to be proclaiming the merits of some quack remedy. *Opodeldoc—opodeldoc-try-Doctor-Lincoln's-opodeldoc!* He seemed to repeat over and over again, with a rapidity that would have distanced the deftest-tongued Figaro that ever rattled. I remember Count Gurowski saying once, with that easy superiority of knowledge about this country which is the monopoly of foreigners, that we had no singing birds! Well, well, Mr. Hepworth Dixon has found the typical America in Oneida and Salt Lake City. Of course, an intelligent European is the best judge of these matters. The truth is, there are more singing-birds in Europe because there are fewer forests. These songsters love the neighbourhood of man because hawks and owls are rarer, while their own food is more abundant. Most people seem to think, the more trees the more birds. Even Chateaubriand, who first tried the primitive-forest-cure, and whose description of the wilderness in its imaginative effects is unmatched, fancies the "people of the air singing their hymns to him." So far as my own observation goes, the farther one penetrates the sombre solitudes of the woods, the more seldom does he hear the voice of any singing-bird. In spite of Chateaubriand's minuteness of detail, in spite of that marvellous reverberation of the decrepit tree falling of its own weight, which he was the first to notice, I cannot help doubting whether he made his way very deep into the wilderness. At any rate, in a letter to Fontanes, written in 1804, he speaks of *mes chevaux paissant à quelque distance.* To be sure, Chateaubriand was apt to mount the high horse, and this may have been but an after-thought of the *grand seigneur,* but certainly one would not make much headway on horseback toward the druid fastnesses of the primeval pine.

The bobolinks build in considerable numbers in a meadow within a quarter of a mile of us. A houseless lane passes through the midst of their camp, and in clear westerly weather, at the right season, one may hear a score of them singing at once. When they are breeding, if I chance to pass, one of the male birds always accompanies me like a constable, flitting from post to post of the rail-fence, with a short note of reproof continually repeated, till I am fairly out of the neighbourhood. Then he will swing away into the air and run down the wind, gurgling music without stint over the unheeding tussocks of meadow-grass and dark clumps of bulrushes that mark his domain.

We have no bird whose song will match the nightingale's in compass,

none whose note is so rich as that of the European blackbird; but for mere rapture I have never heard the bobolink's rival. But his opera-season is a short one. The ground and tree sparrows are our most constant performers. It is now late in August, and one of the latter sings every day and all day long in the garden. Till within a fortnight, a pair of indigo-birds would keep up their lively *duo* for an hour together. While I write, I hear an oriole gay as in June, and the plaintive *maybe* of the goldfinch tells me he is stealing my lettuce seeds. I know not what the experience of others may have been, but the only bird I have ever heard sing in the night has been the chip-bird. I should say he sang about as often during the darkness as cocks crow. One can hardly help fancying that he sings in his dreams.

> Father of light, what sunnie seed,
> What glance of day hast thou confined
> Into this bird? To all the breed
> This busie ray thou hast assigned;
> Their magnetism works all night,
> And dreams of Paradise and light.

On second thought, I remember to have heard the cuckoo strike the hours nearly all night with the regularity of a Swiss clock.

The dead limbs of our elms, which I spare to that end, bring us the flicker every summer, and almost daily I hear his wild scream and laugh close at hand, himself invisible. He is a shy bird, but a few days ago I had the satisfaction of studying him through the blinds as he sat on a tree within a few feet of me. Seen so near and at rest, he makes good his claim to the title of pigeon-woodpecker. Lumberers have a notion that he is harmful to timber, digging little holes through the bark to encourage the settlement of insects. The regular rings of such perforations which one may see in almost any apple-orchard seem to give some probability to this theory. Almost every season a solitary quail visits us, and, unseen among the currant-bushes, calls *Bob White, Bob White,* as if he were playing at hide-and-seek with that imaginary being. A rarer visitant is the turtle-dove, whose pleasant coo (something like the muffled crow of a cock from a coop covered with snow) I have sometimes heard, and whom I once had the good luck to see close by me in the mulberry-tree. The wild-pigeon, once numerous, I have not seen for many years.[1] Of savage birds, a hen-hawk now and then quarters himself upon us for a few days, sitting sluggish in a tree after a surfeit of poultry. One of them once offered me a near shot from my study-window one drizzly day for several hours. But it was Sunday, and I gave him the benefit of its gracious truce of God.

Certain birds have disappeared from our neighbourhood within my memory. I remember when the whippoorwill could be heard in Sweet

[1] They made their appearance again this summer (1870).

Auburn. The night-hawk, once common, is now rare. The brown thrush has moved farther up country. For years I have not seen or heard any of the larger owls, whose hooting was one of my boyish terrors. The cliff-swallow, strange emigrant, that eastward takes his way, has come and gone again in my time. The bank-swallows, well-nigh innumerable during my boyhood, no longer frequent the crumbly cliff of the gravel-pit by the river. The barn-swallows, which once swarmed in our barn, flashing through the dusty sunstreaks of the mow, have been gone these many years. My father would lead me out to see them gather on the roof, and take counsel before their yearly migration, as Mr. White used to see them at Selborne. *Eheu, fugaces!* Thank fortune, the swift still glues his nest, and rolls his distant thunders night and day in the wide-throated chimneys, still sprinkles the evening air with his merry twittering. The populous heronry in Fresh Pond meadows has been well-nigh broken up, but still a pair or two haunt the old home, as the gypsies of Ellangowan their ruined huts, and every evening fly over us riverwards, clearing their throats with a hoarse hawk as they go, and, in cloudy weather, scarce higher than the tops of the chimneys. Sometimes I have known one to alight in one of our trees, though for what purpose I never could divine. Kingfishers have sometimes puzzled me in the same way, perched at high noon in a pine, springing their watchman's rattle when they flitted away from my curiosity, and seeming to shove their top-heavy heads along as a man does a wheel-barrow.

Some birds have left us, I suppose, because the country is growing less wild. I once found a summer duck's nest within a quarter of a mile of our house, but such a *trouvaille* would be impossible now as Kidd's treasure. And yet the mere taming of the neighbourhood does not quite satisfy me as an explanation. Twenty years ago, on my way to bathe in the river, I saw every day a brace of woodcock, on the miry edge of a spring within a few rods of a house, and constantly visited by thirsty cows. There was no growth of any kind to conceal them, and yet these ordinarily shy birds were almost as indifferent to my passing as common poultry would have been. Since bird-nesting has become scientific, and dignified itself as oology, that, no doubt, is partly to blame for some of our losses. But some old friends are constant. Wilson's thrush comes every year to remind me of that most poetic of ornithologists. He flits before me through the pine-walk like the very genius of solitude. A pair of pewees have built immemorially on a jutting brick in the arched entrance to the ice-house. Always on the same brick, and never more than a single pair, though two broods of five each are raised there every summer. How do they settle their claim to the homestead? By what right of primogeniture? Once the children of a man employed about the place *oologized* the nest, and the pewees left us for a year or two. I felt towards those boys as the messmates of the

Ancient Mariner did towards him after he had shot the albatross. But the pewees came back at last, and one of them is now on his wonted perch so near my window that I can hear the click of his bill as he snaps a fly on the wing with the unerring precision a stately Trasteverina shows in the capture of her smaller deer. The pewee is the first bird to pipe up in the morning; and during the early summer he preludes his matutinal ejaculation of *pewee* with a slender whistle, unheard at any other time. He saddens with the season, and, as summer declines, he changes his note *eheu, pewee!* as if in lamentation. Had he been an Italian bird, Ovid would have had a plaintive tale to tell about him. He is so familiar as often to pursue a fly through the open window into my library.

There is something inexpressibly dear to me in these old friendships of a lifetime. There is scarce a tree of mine but has had, at some time or other, a happy homestead among its boughs, to which I cannot say,

> Many light hearts and wings,
> Which now be dead, lodged in thy living bowers.

My walk under the pines would lose half its summer charm were I to miss that shy anchorite, the Wilson's thrush, nor hear in haying-time the metallic ring of his song, that justifies his rustic name of *scythe-whet*. I protect my game as jealously as an English squire. If anybody had oologized a certain cuckoo's nest I know of (I have a pair in my garden every year), it would have left me a sore place in my mind for weeks. I love to bring these aborigines back to the mansuetude they showed to the early voyagers, and before (forgive the involuntary pun) they had grown accustomed to man and knew his savage ways. And they repay your kindness with a sweet familiarity too delicate ever to breed contempt. I have made a Penn-treaty with them, preferring that to the Puritan way with the natives, which converted them to a little Hebraism and a great deal of Medford rum. If they will not come near enough to me (as most of them will), I bring them close with an opera-glass—a much better weapon than a gun. I would not, if I could, convert them from their pretty pagan ways. The only one I sometimes have savage doubts about is the red squirrel. I *think* he oologizes. I *know* he eats cherries (we counted five of them at one time in a single tree, the stones pattering down like the sparse hail that preludes a storm), and that he gnaws off the small end of pears to get at the seeds. He steals the corn from under the noses of my poultry. But what would you have? He will come down upon the limb of the tree I am lying under till he is within a yard of me. He and his mate will scurry up and down the great black-walnut for my diversion, chattering like monkeys. Can I sign his death-warrant who has tolerated me about his grounds so long? Not I. Let them steal, and welcome. I am sure I should, had I had the same bringing up and the same temptation.

As for the birds, I do not believe there is one of them but does more good than harm; and of how many featherless bipeds can this be said?

* * *

H. D. THOREAU

Henry David Thoreau was born in 1817 of French descent on his father's side. He was at Harvard from 1833 to 1837, and became by turns a schoolmaster, a pencil-maker, and a surveyor. He was a friend of Emerson whose insistence upon the necessity for self-reliance peculiarly suited him. He protested against the artificialities of civilized existence and sought to show by his experiment on the shore of Walden Pond to what simple elements life could be reduced and yet retain all that a man needed. His descriptions of nature are charming in their intimacy and beauty. He died in 1862. His works include *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, *Walden* (from which the following essay is taken), *Excursions*, *A Yankee in Canada*, and *Early Spring in Massachusetts*.

THE VILLAGE

AFTER hoeing, or perhaps reading and writing, in the forenoon, I usually bathed again in the pond, swimming across one of its coves for a stint, and washed the dust of labour from my person, or smoothed out the last wrinkle which study had made, and for the afternoon was absolutely free. Every day or two I strolled to the village to hear some of the gossip which is incessantly going on there, circulating either from mouth to mouth, or from newspaper to newspaper, and which, taken in homœopathic doses, was really as refreshing in its way as the rustle of leaves and the peeping of frogs. As I walked in the woods to see the birds and squirrels, so I walked in the village to see the men and boys; instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle. In one direction from my house there was a colony of musk-rats in the river meadows; under the grove of elms and buttonwoods in the other horizon was a village of busy men, as curious to me as if they had been prairie dogs, each sitting at the mouth of its burrow, or running over to a neighbour's to gossip. I went there frequently to observe their habits. The village appeared to me a great news-room; and on one side, to support it, as once at Redding and Company's on State Street, they kept nuts and raisins, or salt and meal, and other groceries. Some have such a vast appetite for the former commodity—that is, the news—and such sound digestive organs, that they can sit for ever in public avenues without stirring, and let it simmer and whisper through them like the Etesian winds

or as if inhaling ether, it only producing numbness and insensibility to pain—otherwise it would often be painful to hear—without affecting the consciousness. I hardly ever failed, when I rambled through the village, to see a row of such worthies either sitting on a ladder sunning themselves, with their bodies inclined forward and their eyes glancing along the line this way and that, from time to time, with a voluptuous expression, or else leaning against a barn with their hands in their pockets, like caryatides, as if to prop it up. They, being commonly out of doors, heard whatever was in the wind. These are the coarsest mills, in which all gossip is first rudely digested or racked up before it is emptied into finer and more delicate hoppers within doors. I observed that the vitals of the village were the grocery, the bar-room, the post office, and the bank; and, as a necessary part of the machinery, they kept a bell, a big gun, and a fire-engine, at convenient places; and the houses were so arranged as to make the most of mankind, in lanes and fronting one another, so that every traveller had to run the gauntlet, and every man, woman, and child might get a lick at him. Of course, those who were stationed nearest to the head of the line, where they could most see and be seen, and have the first blow at him, paid the highest prices for their place; and the few straggling inhabitants in the outskirts, where long gaps in the line began to occur, and the traveller could get over walls or turn aside into cow-paths, and so escape, paid a very slight ground or window tax. Signs were hung out on all sides to allure him; some to catch him by the appetite, as the tavern and victualling cellar; some by the fancy, as the dry goods store and the jeweller's; and others by the hair, or the feet, or the skirts, as the barber, the shoemaker, or the tailor. Besides, there was a still more terrible standing invitation to call at every one of these houses, and company expected about these times. For the most part I escaped wonderfully from these dangers, either by proceeding at once boldly and without deliberation to the goal, as is recommended to those who run the gauntlet, or by keeping my thoughts on high things, like Orpheus, who, "loudly singing the praises of the gods to his lyre, drowned the voices of the Sirens, and kept out of danger." Sometimes I bolted suddenly, and nobody could tell my whereabouts, for I did not stand much about gracefulness, and never hesitated at a gap in a fence. I was even accustomed to make an irruption into some houses, where I was well entertained, and after learning the kernels and very last sieveful of news, what had subsided, the prospects of war and peace, and whether the world was likely to hold together much longer, I was let out through the rear avenues, and so escaped to the woods again.

It was very pleasant, when I stayed late in town, to launch myself into the night, especially if it was dark and tempestuous, and set sail from some bright village parlour or lecture room, with a bag of rye or Indian meal upon my shoulder, for my snug harbour in the woods,

having made all tight without and withdrawn under hatches with a merry crew of thoughts, leaving only my outer man at the helm, or even tying up the helm when it was plain sailing. I had many a genial thought by the cabin fire "as I sailed." I was never cast away nor distressed in any weather, though I encountered some severe storms. It is darker in the woods, even in common nights, than most suppose. I frequently had to look up at the opening between the trees above the path in order to learn my route, and, where there was no cart-path, to feel with my feet the faint track which I had worn, or steer by the known relation of particular trees which I felt with my hands, passing between two pines for instance, not more than eighteen inches apart, in the midst of the woods, invariably in the darkest night. Sometimes, after coming home thus late in a dark and muggy night, when my feet felt the path which my eyes could not see, dreaming and absent-minded all the way, until I was aroused by having to raise my hand to lift the latch, I have not been able to recall a single step of my walk, and I have thought that perhaps my body would find its way home if its master should forsake it, as the hand finds its way to the mouth without assistance. Several times, when a visitor chanced to stay into evening, and it proved a dark night, I was obliged to conduct him to the cart-path in the rear of the house, and then point out to him the direction he was to pursue, and in keeping which he was to be guided rather by his feet than his eyes. One very dark night I directed thus on their way two young men who had been fishing in the pond. They lived about a mile off through the woods, and were quite used to the route. A day or two after one of them told me that they wandered about the greater part of the night, close by their own premises, and did not get home till toward morning, by which time, as there had been several heavy showers in the meanwhile, and the leaves were very wet, they were drenched to their skins. I have heard of many going astray even in the village streets, when the darkness was so thick that you could cut it with a knife, as the saying is. Some who live in the outskirts, having come to town a-shopping in their waggons, have been obliged to put up for the night; and ladies and gentlemen making a call, have gone half a mile out of their way, feeling the side-walk only with their feet, and not knowing when they turned. It is surprising and memorable, as well as valuable experience, to be lost in the woods at any time. Often in a snowstorm, even by day, one will come out upon a well-known road and yet find it impossible to tell which way leads to the village. Though he knows that he has travelled it a thousand times, he cannot recognize a feature in it, but it is as strange to him as if it were a road in Siberia. By night, of course, the perplexity is infinitely greater. In our most trivial walks we are constantly, though unconsciously, steering like pilots by certain well-

known beacons and headlands, and if we go beyond our usual course we still carry in our minds the bearing of some neighbouring cape; and not till we are completely lost, or turned round—for a man needs only to be turned round once with his eyes shut in this world to be lost—do we appreciate the vastness and strangeness of Nature. Every man has to learn the points of compass again as often as he awakes, whether from sleep or any abstraction. Not till we are lost—in other words, not till we have lost the world—do we begin to find ourselves, and realize where we are, and the infinite extent of our relations.

One afternoon, near the end of the first summer, when I went to the village to get a shoe from the cobbler's, I was seized and put into jail, because, as I have elsewhere related, I did not pay a tax to, or recognize the authority of, the state which buys and sells men, women, and children, like cattle at the door of its senate-house. I had gone down the woods for other purposes. But, wherever a man goes, men will pursue and paw him with their dirty institutions, and, if they can, constrain him to belong to their desperate odd-fellow society. It is true, I might have resisted forcibly with more or less effect, might have run "amok" against society; but I preferred that society should run "amok" against me, it being the desperate party. However, I was released the next day, obtained my mended shoe, and returned to the woods in season to get my dinner of huckleberries on Fair-Haven Hill. I was never molested by any person but those who represented the State. I had no lock nor bolt but for the desk which held my papers, not even a nail to put over my latch or windows. I never fastened my door night or day, though I was to be absent several days; not even when the next fall I spent a fortnight in the woods of Maine. And yet my house was more respected than if it had been surrounded by a file of soldiers. The tired rambler could rest and warm himself by my fire, the literary amuse himself with the few books on my table, or the curious, by opening my closet door, see what was left of my dinner, and what prospect I had of a supper. Yet, though many people of every class came this way to the pond, I suffered no serious inconvenience from these sources, and I never missed anything but one small book, a volume of Homer, which perhaps was improperly gilded, and this I trust a soldier of our camp has found by this time. I am convinced, that if all men were to live as simply as I then did, thieving and robbery would be unknown. These take place only in communities where some have got more than is sufficient, while others have not enough. The Pope's Homers would soon get properly distributed—

Nec bella fuerunt,
Faginus astabat dum scyphus ante dapes.

Nor wars did men molest,
When only beechen bowls were in request.

"You who govern public affairs, what need have you to employ punishments? Love virtue, and the people will be virtuous. The virtues of a superior man are like the wind; the virtues of a common man are like the grass; the grass, when the wind passes over it, bends."

* * *

DONALD G. MITCHELL

Donald Grant Mitchell ("Ik Marvel") was born in 1822. He became U. S. consul at Venice in 1853 and was for two years editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*. His writings include *Reveries of a Bachelor*, (from which the following essay is taken), *Dream Life*, *Dr. Johns*, and *English Lands, Letters, and Kings*. He died in 1908.

A BACHELOR'S REVERIE

Over a Wood Fire

I HAVE got a quiet farmhouse in the country, a very humble place to be sure, tenanted by a worthy enough man, of the old New England stamp, where I sometimes go for a day or two in the winter, to look over the farm accounts, and to see how the stock is thriving on the winter's keep.

One side of the door, as you enter from the porch, is a little parlour, scarce twelve feet by ten, with a cosy-looking fireplace—a heavy oak floor—a couple of armchairs and a brown table with carved lions' feet. Out of this room opens a little cabinet, only big enough for a broad bachelor bedstead, where I sleep upon feathers, and wake in the morning, with my eye upon a saucy-coloured lithographic print of some fancy "Bessy."

It happens to be the only house in the world of which I am *bona fide* owner; and I take a vast deal of comfort in treating it just as I choose. I manage to break some article of furniture, almost every time I pay it a visit; and if I cannot open the window readily of a morning, to breathe the fresh air, I knock out a pane or two of glass with my boot. I lean against the walls in a very old armchair there is on the premises, and scarce ever fail to worry such a hole in the plastering as would set me down for a round charge for damages in town, or make a prim housewife fret herself into a raging fever. I laugh out loud with myself, in my big armchair, when I think that I am neither afraid of one nor the other.

As for the fire, I keep the little hearth so hot, as to warm half the cellar below, and the whole space between the jambs roars for hours

together, with white flame. To be sure, the windows are not very tight, between broken panes, and bad joints, so that the fire, large as it is, is by no means an extravagant comfort.

As night approaches, I have a huge pile of oak and hickory placed beside the hearth; I put out the tallow candle on the mantel, (using the family snuffers, with one leg broken,)—then, drawing my chair directly in front of the blazing wood, and setting one foot on each of the old iron firedogs, (until they grow too warm,) I dispose myself for an evening of such sober and thoughtful quietude, as I believe, on my soul, that very few of my fellow-men have the good fortune to enjoy.

My tenant, meantime, in the other room, I can hear now and then—though there is a thick stone chimney and broad entry between—multiplying contrivances with his wife, to put two babies to sleep. This occupies them, I should say, usually an hour; though my only measure of time (for I never carry a watch into the country) is the blaze of my fire. By ten, or thereabouts, my stock of wood is nearly exhausted; I pile upon the hot coals what remains, and sit watching how it kindles, and blazes, and goes out—even like our joys!—and then slip by the light of the embers into my bed, where I luxuriate in such sound and healthful slumber as only such rattling window frames and country air can supply.

But to return: the other evening—it happened to be on my last visit to my farmhouse—when I had exhausted all the ordinary rural topics of thought; had formed all sorts of conjectures as to the income of the year; had planned a new wall around one lot, and the clearing up of another, now covered with patriarchal wood; and wondered if the little rickety house would not be after all a snug enough box to live and to die in—I fell on a sudden into such an unprecedented line of thought, which took such deep hold of my sympathies—sometimes even starting tears—that I determined, the next day, to set as much of it as I could recall on paper.

Something—it may have been the home-looking blaze, (I am a bachelor of—say six and twenty,) or possibly a plaintive cry of the baby in my tenant's room, had suggested to me the thought of—Marriage.

I piled upon the heated firedogs the last armful of my wood; and now, said I, bracing myself courageously between the arms of my chair—I'll not flinch;—I'll pursue the thought wherever it leads, though it leads me to the d——, (I am apt to be hasty,)—at least—continued I, softening—until my fire is out.

The wood was green, and at first showed no disposition to blaze. It smoked furiously. Smoke, thought I, always goes before blaze; and so does doubt go before decision: and my Reverie, from that very starting point, slipped into this shape:

I. SMOKE—SIGNIFYING DOUBT

A wife?—thought I;—yes, a wife!

And why?

And pray, my dear sir, why not—why? Why not doubt; why not hesitate; why not tremble?

Does a man buy a ticket in a lottery—a poor man, whose whole earnings go in to secure the ticket—without trembling, hesitating, and doubting?

Can a man stake his bachelor respectability, his independence and comfort, upon the die of absorbing, unchanging, relentless marriage, without trembling at the venture?

Shall a man who has been free to chase his fancies over the wide world, without let or hindrance, shut himself up to marriageship, within four walls called Home, that are to claim him, his time, his trouble, and his tears, thenceforward for evermore, without doubts thick, and thick-coming as Smoke?

Shall he who has been hitherto a mere observer of other men's cares and business—moving off where they made him sick of heart, approaching whenever and wherever they made him gleeful—shall he now undertake administration of just such cares and business, without qualms? Shall he, whose whole life has been but a nimble succession of escapes from trifling difficulties, now broach without doubtings—that Matrimony, where, if difficulty beset him, there is no escape? Shall this brain of mine, careless-working, never tired with idleness, feeding on long vagaries, and high, gigantic castles, dreaming out beatitudes hour by hour—turn itself at length to such dull task work as thinking out a livelihood for wife and children?

Where thenceforward will be those sunny dreams, in which I have warmed my fancies, and my heart, and lighted my eye with crystal? This very marriage, which a brilliant-working imagination has invested time and again with brightness and delight, can serve no longer as a mine for teeming fancy; all, alas, will be gone—reduced to the dull standard of the actual! No more room for intrepid forays of imagination—no more gorgeous realm making—all will be over!

Why not, I thought, go on dreaming?

Can any wife be prettier than an after-dinner fancy, idle and yet vivid, can paint for you? Can any children make less noise than the little rosy-cheeked ones, who have no existence, except in the *omnium gatherum* of your own brain? Can any housewife be more unexceptionable than she who goes sweeping daintily the cobwebs that gather in your dreams? Can any domestic larder be better stocked than the private larder of your head dozing on a cushioned chair back at Delmonico's? Can any family purse be better filled than the exceeding

plump one you dream of, after reading such pleasant books as *Munchausen* or *Typee?*

But if, after all, it must be—duty, or what not, making provocation—what then? And I clapped my feet hard against the firedogs, and leaned back, and turned my face to the ceiling, as much as to say: And where on earth, then, shall a poor devil look for a wife?

Somebody says, Lyttleton or Shaftesbury, I think, that "marriages would be happier if they were all arranged by the Lord Chancellor." Unfortunately we have no Lord Chancellor to make this commutation of our misery.

Shall a man then scour the country on a mule's back, like Honest Gil Blas of Santillane; or shall he make application to some such intervening providence as Madame St. Marc, who, as I see by the *Presse,* manages these matters to one's hand, for some five per cent on the fortunes of the parties?

I have trouted when the brook was so low, and the sky so hot, that I might as well have thrown my fly upon the turnpike; and I have hunted hare at noon, and woodcock in snow time—never despairing, scarce doubting; but for a poor hunter of his kind, without traps or snares, or any aid of police or constabulary, to traverse the world, where are swarming, on a moderate computation, some three hundred and odd millions of unmarried women, for a single capture—irremediable, unchangeable—and yet a capture which by strange metonymy, not laid down in the books, is very apt to turn captor into captive, and make game of hunter—all this, surely, surely may make a man shrug with doubt!

Then—again—there are the plaguy wife's relations. Who knows how many third, fourth, or fifth cousins will appear at careless complimentary intervals long after you had settled into the placid belief that all congratulatory visits were at an end? How many twisted-headed brothers will be putting in their advice, as a friend to Peggy?

How many maiden aunts will come to spend a month or two with their "dear Peggy," and want to know every tea time, "if she isn't a dear love of a wife?" Then, dear father-in-law will beg (taking dear Peggy's hand in his) to give a little wholesome counsel; and will be very sure to advise just the contrary of what you had determined to undertake. And dear mamma-in-law must set her nose into Peggy's cupboard, and insist upon having the key to your own private locker in the wainscot.

Then, perhaps, there is a little bevy of dirty-nosed nephews who come to spend the holidays, and eat up your East India sweetmeats; and who are forever tramping over your head or raising the old Harry below, while you are busy with your clients. Last, and worse, is some fidgety old uncle, forever too cold or too hot, who vexes you with his patronizing airs, and impudently kisses his little Peggy!

—That could be borne, however: for perhaps he has promised his fortune to Peggy. Peggy, then, will be rich:—(and the thought made me rub my shins, which were now getting comfortably warm upon the firedogs). Then, she will be forever talking of *her* fortune; and pleasantly reminding you on occasion of a favourite purchase—how lucky that *she* had the means; and dropping hints about economy; and buying very extravagant Paisleys.

She will annoy you by looking over the stock list at breakfast time; and mention quite carelessly to your clients, that she is interested in *such* or such a speculation.

She will be provokingly silent when you hint to a tradesman that you have not the money by you for his small bill;—in short, she will tear the life out of you, making you pay in righteous retribution of annoyance, grief, vexation, shame, and sickness of heart for the superlative folly of "marrying rich."

—But if not rich, then poor. Bah! the thought made me stir the coals; but there was still no blaze. The paltry earnings you are able to wring out of clients by the sweat of your brow will now be all *our* income; you will be pestered for pin money, and pestered with your poor wife's relations. Ten to one, she will stickle about taste—"Sir Visto's"—and want to make this so pretty, and that so charming, if she *only* had the means; and is sure Paul (a kiss) can't deny his little Peggy such a trifling sum, and all for the common benefit.

Then she, for one, means that *her* children shan't go a begging for clothes—and another pull at the purse. Trust a poor mother to dress her children in finery!

Perhaps she is ugly;—not noticeable at first; but growing on her, and (what is worse) growing faster on you. You wonder why you didn't see that vulgar nose long ago: and that lip—it is very strange, you think that you ever thought it pretty. And then—to come to breakfast, with her hair looking as it does, and you not so much as daring to say—"Peggy, *do* brush your hair!" Her foot too—not very bad when decently *chaussée*—but now since she's married she does wear such infernal slippers! And yet for all this, to be prigging up for an hour, when any of my old chums come to dine with me!

"Bless your kind hearts! my dear fellows," said I, thrusting the tongs into the coals, and speaking out loud, as if my voice could reach from Virginia to Paris—"not married yet!"

Perhaps Peggy is pretty enough—only shrewish.

—No matter for cold coffee;—you should have been up before.

What sad, thin, poorly cooked chops, to eat with your rolls!

—She thinks they are very good, and wonders how you can set such an example to your children.

The butter is nauseating.

—She has no other, and hopes you'll not raise a storm about butter

a little turned. I think I see myself—ruminated I—sitting meekly at table, scarce daring to lift up my eyes, utterly fagged out with some quarrel of yesterday, choking down detestably sour muffins, that my wife thinks are "delicious"—slipping in dried mouthfuls of burnt ham off the side of my fork tines—slipping off my chair sideways at the end, and slipping out with my hat between my knees, to business, and never feeling myself a competent, sound-minded man till the oak door is between me and Peggy!

—"Ha, ha—not yet!" said I; and in so earnest a tone, that my dog started to his feet—cocked his eye to have a good look into my face—met my smile of triumph with an amiable wag of the tail, and curled up again in the corner.

Again, Peggy is rich enough, well enough, mild enough, only she doesn't care a fig for you. She has married you because father or grandfather thought the match eligible, and because she didn't wish to disoblige them. Besides, she didn't positively hate you, and thought you were a respectable enough young person;—she has told you so repeatedly at dinner. She wonders you like to read poetry; she wishes you would buy her a good cookbook; and insists upon your making your will at the birth of the first baby.

She thinks Captain So-and-So a splendid-looking fellow, and wishes you would trim up a little, were it only for appearance' sake.

You need not hurry up from the office so early at night;—she, bless her dear heart!—does not feel lonely. You read to her a love tale; she interrupts the pathetic parts with directions to her seamstress. You read of marriages: she sighs, and asks if Captain So-and-So has left town! She hates to be mewed up in a cottage, or between brick walls; she does *so* love the Springs!

But, again, Peggy loves you;—at least she swears it, with her hand on the *Sorrows of Werther*. She has pin money which she spends for the *Literary World* and the *Friends in Council*. She is not bad looking, save a bit too much of forehead; nor is she sluttish, unless a *négligé* till three o'clock, and an ink stain on the forefinger, be sluttish;—but then she is such a sad blue!

You never fancied when you saw her buried in a three-volume novel, that it was anything more than a girlish vagary; and when she quoted Latin, you thought innocently that she had a capital memory for her samplers.

But to be bored eternally about Divine Dante and funny Goldoni, is too bad. Your copy of Tasso, a treasure print of 1680, is all bethumbed and dog's-eared, and spotted with baby gruel. Even your Seneca—an Elzevir—is all sweaty with handling. She adores La Fontaine, reads Balzac with a kind of artist scowl, and will not let Greek alone.

You hint at broken rest and an aching head at breakfast, and she

will fling you a scrap of Anthology—in lieu of the camphor bottle—or chant the *alaî alaî* of tragic chorus.

—The nurse is getting dinner; you are holding the baby; Peggy is reading Bruyère.

The fire smoked thick as pitch, and puffed out little clouds over the chimney-piece. I gave the forestick a kick, at the thought of Peggy, baby, and Bruyère.

—Suddenly the flame flickered bluely athwart the smoke—caught at a twig below—rolled round the mossy oak stick—twined among the crackling tree limbs—mounted—lit up the whole body of smoke, and blazed out cheerily and bright. Doubt vanished with Smoke, and Hope began with Flame.

II. BLAZE—SIGNIFYING CHEER

I pushed my chair back; drew up another; stretched out my feet cozily upon it, rested my elbows on the chair arms, leaned my head on one hand, and looked straight into the leaping and dancing flame.

—Love is a flame—ruminated I; and (glancing round the room) how a flame brightens up a man's habitation!

"Carlo," said I, calling up my dog into the light, "good fellow, Carlo!" and I patted him kindly, and he wagged his tail, and laid his nose across my knee, and looked wistfully up in my face; then strode away—turned to look again, and lay down to sleep.

"Pho, the brute!" said I; "it is not enough after all to like a dog."

—If now in that chair yonder, not the one your feet lie upon, but the other, beside you—closer yet—were seated a sweet-faced girl, with a pretty little foot lying out upon the hearth—a bit of lace running round the swelling throat—the hair parted to a charm over a forehead fair as any of your dreams;—and if you could reach an arm around that chair back, without fear of giving offence, and suffer your fingers to play idly with those curls that escape down the neck; and if you could clasp with your other hand those little white, taper fingers of hers, which lie so temptingly within reach—and so, talk softly and low in presence of the blaze, while the hours slip without knowledge, and the winter winds whistle uncared for;—if, in short, you were no bachelor, but the husband of some such sweet image—(dream, call it rather), would it not be far pleasanter than this cold single night sitting—counting the sticks—reckoning the length of the blaze and the height of the falling snow?

And if some or all of those wild vagaries that grow on your fancy at such an hour, you could whisper into listening, because loving ears—ears not tired with listening, because it is you who whisper—ears ever indulgent because eager to praise;—and if your darkest fancies were lit up, not merely with bright wood fire, but with a ringing laugh

of that sweet face turned up in fond rebuke—how far better, than to be waxing black and sour, over pestilential humours—alone—your very dog asleep!

And if when a glowing thought comes into your brain, quick and sudden, you could tell it over as to a second self, to that sweet creature, who is not away, because she loves to be there; and if you could watch the thought catching that girlish mind, illuming that fair brow, sparkling in those pleasantest of eyes—how far better than to feel it slumbering, and going out, heavy, lifeless, and dead, in your own selfish fancy. And if a generous emotion steals over you—coming, you know not whither, would there not be a richer charm in lavishing it in caress, or endearing word, upon that fondest, and most dear one, than in patting your glossy-coated dog, or sinking lonely to smiling slumbers?

How would not benevolence ripen with such monitor to task it! How would not selfishness grow faint and dull, leaning ever to that second self, which is the loved one! How would not guile shiver, and grow weak, before that girl brow and eye of innocence! How would not all that boyhood prized of enthusiasm, and quick blood, and life, renew itself in such a presence!

The fire was getting hotter, and I moved into the middle of the room. The shadows the flames made were playing like fairy forms over floor, and wall, and ceiling.

My fancy would surely quicken, thought I, if such being were in attendance. Surely imagination would be stronger, and purer, if it could have the playful fancies of dawning womanhood to delight it. All toil would be torn from mind labour, if but another heart grew into this present soul, quickening it, warming it, cheering it, bidding it ever —God speed!

Her face would make a halo, rich as a rainbow, atop of all such noisome things as we lonely souls call trouble. Her smile would illumine the blackest of crowding cares; and darkness, that now seats you despondent in your solitary chair for days together weaving bitter fancies, dreaming bitter dreams, would grow light and thin, and spread, and float away—chased by that beloved smile.

Your friend—poor fellow!—dies:—never mind, that gentle clasp of *her* fingers, as she steals behind you, telling you not to weep—it is worth ten friends!

Your sister, sweet one, is dead—buried. The worms are busy with all her fairness. How it makes you think earth nothing but a spot to dig graves upon!

—It is more: *she,* she says, will be a sister; and the waving curls as she leans upon your shoulder touch your cheek, and your wet eye turns to meet those other eyes—God has sent his angel, surely!

Your mother, alas for it, she is gone! Is there any bitterness to a youth, alone, and homeless, like this!

But you are not homeless; you are not alone: *she* is there;—her tears softening yours, her smile lighting yours, her grief killing yours; and you live again, to assuage that kind sorrow of hers.

Then—those children, rosy, fair-haired; no, they do not disturb you with their prattle now—they are yours! Toss away there on the green-sward—never mind the hyacinths, the snowdrops, the violets, if so be any are there; the perfume of their healthful lips is worth all the flowers of the world. No need now to gather wild bouquets to love and cherish: flower, tree, gun, are all dead things; things livelier hold your soul.

And she, the mother, sweetest and fairest of all, watching, tending, caressing, loving, till your own heart grows pained with tenderest jealousy, and cures itself with loving.

You have no need now of any cold lecture to teach thankfulness: your heart is full of it. No need now, as once, of bursting blossoms, of trees taking leaf, and greenness, to turn thought kindly, and thankfully; forever beside you there is bloom, and ever beside you there is fruit—for which eye, heart, and soul are full of unknown, and unspoken, because unspeakable, thank offering.

And if sickness catches you, binds you, lays you down—no lonely moanings and wicked curses at careless-stepping nurses. *The* step is noiseless, and yet distinct beside you. The white curtains are drawn, or withdrawn by the magic of that other presence; and the soft, cool hand is upon your brow.

No cold comfortings of friend watchers, merely come in to steal a word away from that outer world which is pulling at their skirts; but, ever, the sad, shaded brow of her whose lightest sorrow for your sake is your greatest grief—if it were not a greater joy.

The blaze was leaping light and high, and the wood falling under the growing heat.

—So, continued I, this heart would be at length itself;—striving with everything gross, even now as it clings to grossness. Love would make its strength native and progressive. Earth's cares would fly. Joys would double. Susceptibilities be quickened; Love master self; and having made the mastery, stretch onward, and upward toward Infinitude.

And if the end came, and sickness brought that follower—Great Follower—which sooner or later is sure to come after, then the heart, and the hand of Love, ever near, are giving to your tired soul, daily and hourly, lessons of that love which consoles, which triumphs, which circleth all, and centereth in all—Love Infinite and Divine!

Kind hands—none but *hers*—will smooth the hair upon your brow as the chill grows damp and heavy on it; and her fingers—none but hers—will be in yours as the wasted flesh stiffens and hardens for the ground. *Her* tears—you could feel no others, if oceans fell—will

warm your drooping features once more to life; once more your eye, lighted in joyous triumph, kindle in her smile, and then ——

The fire fell upon the hearth; the blaze gave a last leap—a flicker—then another—caught a little remaining twig—blazed up—wavered—went out.

There was nothing but a bed of glowing embers, over which the white ashes gathered fast. I was alone with only my dog for company.

III. ASHES—SIGNIFYING DESOLATION

After all, thought I, ashes follow blaze, inevitably as Death follows Life. Misery treads on the heels of Joy; Anguish rides swift after Pleasure.

"Come to me again, Carlo," said I to my dog; and I patted him fondly once more, but now only by the light of the dying embers.

It is very little pleasure one takes in fondling brute favourites; but it is a pleasure that when it passes leaves no void. It is only a little alleviating redundancy in your solitary heart life, which if lost, another can be supplied.

But if your heart, not solitary—not quieting its humours with mere love of chase, or dog—not repressing, year after year, its earnest yearnings after something better, and more spiritual—has fairly linked itself, by bonds strong as life, to another heart—is the casting off easy, then?

Is it then only a little heart redundancy cut off, which the next bright sunset will fill up?

And my fancy, as it had painted doubt under the smoke, and cheer under the warmth of the blaze, so now it began under the faint light of the smouldering embers to picture heart desolation.

What kind congratulatory letters, hosts of them, coming from old and half-forgotten friends, now that your happiness is a year, or two years old!

"Beautiful."

—Aye to be sure, beautiful!

"Rich."

—Pho, the dawdler! how little he knows of heart treasure, who speaks of wealth to a man who loves his wife, as a wife only should be loved!

"Young."

—Young indeed; guileless as infancy; charming as the morning.

Ah, these letters bear a sting: they bring to mind, with new and newer freshness, if it be possible, the value of that which you tremble lest you lose.

How anxiously you watch that step—if it lose not its buoyancy; how you study the colour on that cheek, if it grow not fainter; how

you tremble at the lustre in those eyes, if it be not the lustre of Death; how you totter under the weight of that muslin sleeve—a phantom weight! How you fear to do it, and yet press forward, to note if that breathing be quickened, as you ascend the home heights, to look off on the sunset lighting the plain.

Is your sleep quiet sleep, after that she has whispered to you her fears, and in the same breath—soft as a sigh, sharp as an arrow—bidden you bear it bravely?

Perhaps—the embers were now glowing fresher, a little kindling, before the ashes—she triumphs over disease.

But Poverty, the world's almoner, has come to you with ready, spare hand.

Alone, with your dog living on bones, and you on hope—kindling each morning, dying slowly each night—this could be borne. Philosophy would bring home its stories to the lone man. Money is not in his hand, but Knowledge is in his brain! and from that brain he draws out faster, as he draws slower from his pocket. He remembers: and on remembrance he can live for days and weeks. The garret, if a garret covers him, is rich in fancies. The rain, if it pelts, pelts only him used to rain pelting. And his dog crouches not in dread, but in companionship. His crust he divides with him, and laughs. He crowns himself with glorious memories of Cervantes, though he begs: if he nights it under the stars, he dreams heaven-sent dreams of the prisoned and homeless Galileo.

He hums old sonnets, and snatches of poor Jonson's plays. He chants Dryden's odes, and dwells on Otway's rhyme. He reasons with Bolingbroke or Diogenes, as the humour takes him; and laughs at the world: for the world, thank Heaven, has left him alone!

Keep your money, old misers, and your palaces, old princes—the world is mine!

> I care not, Fortune, what you me deny.—
> You cannot rob me of free nature's grace,
> You cannot shut the windows of the sky;
> You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
> The woods and lawns, by living streams, at eve;
> Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
> And I, their toys, to the great children, leave,
> Of Fancy, Reason, Virtue, naught can me bereave!

But—if not alone?

If *she* is clinging to you for support, for consolation, for home, for life—she, reared in luxury perhaps, is faint for bread?

Then the iron enters the soul; then the nights darken under any sky light. Then the days grow long, even in the solstice of winter.

She may not complain; what then?

Will your heart grow strong, if the strength of her love can dam up the fountains of tears, and the tied tongue not tell of bereavement? Will it solace you to find her parting the poor treasure of food you have stolen for her, with begging, foodless children?

But this ill, strong hands, and Heaven's help, will put down. Wealth again; flowers again; patrimonial acres again; Brightness again. But your little Bessy, your favourite child, is pining.

Would to God! you say in agony, that wealth could bring fullness again into that blanched cheek, or round those little thin lips once more; but it cannot. Thinner and thinner they grow; plaintive and more plaintive her sweet voice.

"Dear Bessy"—and your tones tremble; you feel that she is on the edge of the grave. Can you pluck her back? Can endearments stay her? Business is heavy, away from the loved child; home you go, to fondle while yet time is left—but *this* time you are too late. She is gone. She cannot hear you: she cannot thank you for the violets you put within her stiff white hand.

And then—the grassy mound—the cold shadow of the headstone!

The wind, growing with the night, is rattling at the window panes, and whistles dismally. I wipe a tear, and in the interval of my Reverie thank God that I am no such mourner.

But gaiety, snail-footed, creeps back to the household. All is bright again:

> The violet bed's not sweeter
> Than the delicious breath marriage sends forth.

Her lip is rich and full; her cheek delicate as a flower. Her frailty doubles your love.

And the little one she clasps—frail too—too frail: the boy you had set your hopes and heart on. You have watched him growing, ever prettier, ever winning more and more upon your soul. The love you bore to him when he first lisped names—your name and hers—has doubled in strength now that he asks innocently to be taught of this or that, and promises you by that quick curiosity that flashes in his eye a mind full of intelligence.

And some hairbreadth escape by sea or flood, that he perhaps may have had—which unstrung your soul to such tears as you pray God may be spared you again—has endeared the little fellow to your heart a thousandfold.

And now, with his pale sister in the grave, all *that* love has come away from the mound, where worms feast, and centres on the boy.

How you watch the storms lest they harm him! How often you steal to his bed late at night, and lay your hand lightly upon the brow,

where the curls cluster thick, rising and falling with the throbbing temples, and watch, for minutes together, the little lips half-parted, and listen—your ear close to them—if the breathing be regular and sweet!

But the day comes—the night rather—when you can catch no breathing.

Aye, put your hair away—compose yourself—listen again.

No, there is nothing!

Put your hand now to his brow—damp indeed—but not with healthful night sleep; it is not your hand, no, do not deceive yourself—it is your loved boy's forehead that is so cold; and your loved boy will never speak to you again—never play again—he is dead!

Oh, the tears—the tears; what blessed things are tears! Never fear now to let them fall on his forehead, or his lip, lest you waken him!—Clasp him—clasp him harder—you cannot hurt, you cannot waken him! Lay him down, gently or not, it is the same; he is stiff; he is stark and cold.

But courage is elastic; it is our pride. It recovers itself easier, thought I, than these embers will get into blaze again.

But courage, and patience, and faith, and hope have their limit. Blessed be the man who escapes such trial as will determine limit!

To a lone man it comes not near; for how can trial take hold where there is nothing by which to try?

A funeral? You reason with philsophy. A graveyard? You read Hervey and muse upon the wall. A friend dies? You sigh, you pat your dog—it is over. Losses? You retrench—you light your pipe—it is forgotten. Calumny? You laugh—you sleep.

But with that childless wife clinging to you in love and sorrow—what then?

Can you take down Seneca now, and coolly blow the dust from the leaf tops? Can you crimp your lip with Voltaire? Can you smoke idly, your feet dangling with the ivies, your thoughts all waving fancies upon a churchyard wall—a wall that borders the grave of your boy?

Can you amuse yourself by turning stinging Martial into rhyme? Can you pat your dog, and seeing him wakeful and kind, say, "It is enough"? Can you sneer at calumny, and sit by your fire dozing?

Blessed, thought I again, is the man who escapes such trial as will measure the limit of patience and the limit of courage!

But the trial comes:—colder and colder were growing the embers.

That wife, over whom your love broods, is fading. Not beauty fading;—that, now that your heart is wrapped in her being, would be nothing.

She sees with quick eyes your dawning apprehension, and she tries hard to make that step of hers elastic.

Your trials and your loves together have centred your affections.

They are not now as when you were a lone man, widespread and superficial. They have caught from domestic attachments a finer tone and touch. They cannot shoot out tendrils into barren world soil and suck up thence strengthening nutriment. They have grown under the forcing glass of home roof, they will not now bear exposure.

You do not now look men in the face as if a heart bond was linking you —as if a community of feeling lay between. There is a heart bond that absorbs all others; there is a community that monopolizes your feeling. When the heart lay wide open, before it had grown upon and closed around particular objects, it could take strength and cheer from a hundred connexions that now seem colder than ice.

And now those particular objects—alas for you!—are failing.

What anxiety pursues you! How you struggle to fancy—there is no danger; how she struggles to persuade you—there is no danger!

How it grates now on your ear—the toil and turmoil of the city! It was music when you were alone; it was pleasant even, when from the din you were elaborating comforts for the cherished objects;—when you had such sweet escape as evening drew on.

Now it maddens you to see the world careless while you are steeped in care. They hustle you in the street; they smile at you across the table; they bow carelessly over the way; they do not know what canker is at your heart.

The undertaker comes with his bill for the dead boy's funeral. He knows your grief; he is respectful. You bless him in your soul. You wish the laughing street goers were all undertakers.

Your eye follows the physician as he leaves your house: is he wise? you ask yourself; is he prudent? is he the best? Did he never fail—is he never forgetful?

And now the hand that touches yours, is it no thinner—no whiter than yesterday? Sunny days come when she revives; colour comes back; she breathes freer; she picks flowers; she meets you with a smile: hope lives again.

But the next day of storm she is fallen. She cannot talk even; she presses your hand.

You hurry away from business before your time. What matter for clients—who is to reap the rewards? What matter for fame—whose eye will it brighten? What matter for riches—whose is the inheritance?

You find her propped with pillows; she is looking over a little picture book bethumbed by the dear boy she has lost. She hides it in her chair; she has pity on you.

—Another day of revival, when the spring sun shines, and flowers open out of doors; she leans on your arm, and strolls into the garden where the first birds are singing. Listen to them with her;—what memories are in bird songs! You need not shudder at her tears—they

are tears of Thanksgiving. Press the hand that lies light upon your arm, and you, too, thank God, while yet you may!

You are early home—mid afternoon. Your step is not light: it is heavy, terrible.

They have sent for you.

She is lying down; her eyes half closed; her breathing long and interrupted.

She hears you; her eye opens; you put your hand in hers; yours trembles;—hers does not. Her lips move, it is your name.

"Be strong," she says, "God will help you!"

She presses harder your hand:—"Adieu!"

A long breath—another;—you are alone again. No tears now, poor man! You cannot find them!

—Again home early. There is a smell of varnish in your house. A coffin is there; they have clothed the body in decent graveclothes, and the undertaker is screwing down the lid, slipping round on tip-toes. Does he fear to waken her?

He asks you a simple question about the inscription upon the plate, rubbing it with his coat cuff. You look him straight in the eye; you motion to the door; you dare not speak.

He takes up his hat and glides out stealthful as a cat.

The man has done his work well for all. It is a nice coffin—a very nice coffin! Pass your hand over it—how smooth!

Some sprigs of mignonette are lying carelessly in a little gilt-edged saucer. She loved mignonette.

It is a good staunch table the coffin rests on;—it is your table; you are a housekeeper—a man of family!

Aye, a family!—keep down outcry, or the nurse will be in. Look over at the pinched features; is this all that is left of her? And where is your heart now? No, don't thrust your nails into your hands, nor mangle your lip, nor grate your teeth together. If you could only weep!

—Another day. The coffin is gone out. The stupid mourners have wept—what idle tears! She, with your crushed heart, has gone out!

Will you have pleasant evenings at your home now?

Go into the parlour that your prim housekeeper has made comfortable with clean hearth and blaze of sticks.

Sit down in your chair; there is another velvet-cushioned one over against yours—empty. You press your fingers on your eyeballs as if you would press out something that hurt the brain; but you cannot. Your head leans upon your hand; your eye rests upon the flashing blaze.

Ashes always come after blaze.

Go now into the room where she was sick—softly, lest the prim housekeeper come after.

They have put new dimity upon her chair; they have hung new curtains over the bed. They have removed from the stand its phials, and silver bell; they have put a little vase of flowers in their place; the perfume will not offend the sick sense now. They have half opened the window, that the room so long closed may have air. It will not be too cold.

She is not there.

—Oh, God!—thou who dost temper the wind to the shorn lamb—be kind!

The embers were dark; I stirred them, there was no sign of life. My dog was asleep. The clock in my tenant's chamber had struck one.

I dashed a tear or two from my eyes;—how they came there I know not. I half ejaculated a prayer of thanks, that such desolation had not yet come nigh me; and a prayer of hope—that it might never come.

In a half-hour more, I was sleeping soundly. My Reverie was ended.

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CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

Charles Dudley Warner was born in 1829. After practising law in Chicago he went to Hartford, Conn., and became editor of the *Press* and the *Courant* in turn. In 1884 he was appointed co-editor of *Harper's Magazine*. He died in 1900. His writings include *My Summer in a Garden*, *Back-log Studies*, *Being a Boy*, *Washington Irving*, *Captain John Smith*, and *In the Levant*.

The following essay is reprinted from *As We Were Saying* by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

THE DINNER-TABLE TALK

MANY people suppose that it is the easiest thing in the world to dine if you can get plenty to eat. This error is the foundation of much social misery. The world that never dines, and fancies it has a grievance justifying anarchy on that account, does not know how much misery it escapes. A great deal has been written about the art of dining. From time to time geniuses have appeared who knew how to compose a dinner; indeed, the art of doing it can be learned, as well as the art of cooking and serving it. It is often possible, also, under extraordinarily favourable conditions, to select a company congenial and varied and harmonious enough to dine together successfully. The tact for getting the right people together is perhaps rarer than the art of composing the dinner. But it exists. And an elegant table with a handsome and brilliant company about it is a common conjunction in

this country. Instructions are not wanting as to the shape of the table and the size of the party; it is universally admitted that the number must be small. The big dinner-parties which are commonly made to pay off social debts are generally of the sort that one would rather contribute to in money than in personal attendance. When the dinner is treated as a means of discharging obligations, it loses all character, and becomes one of the social inflictions. While there is nothing in social intercourse so agreeable and inspiring as a dinner of the right sort, society has invented no infliction equal to a large dinner that does not "go," as the phrase is. Why it does not go when the viands are good and the company is bright, is one of the acknowledged mysteries.

There need be no mystery about it. The social instinct and the social habit are wanting to a great many people of uncommon intelligence and cultivation—that sort of flexibility or adaptability that makes agreeable society. But this even does not account for the failure of so many promising dinners. The secret of this failure always is that the conversation is not general. The sole object of the dinner is talk—at least in the United States, where "good eating" is pretty common, however it may be in England, whence come rumours occasionally of accomplished men who decline to be interrupted by the frivolity of talk upon the appearance of favourite dishes. And private talk at a table is not the sort that saves a dinner; however good it is, it always kills it. The chance of arrangement is that the people who would like to talk together are not neighbours; and if they are, they exhaust each other to weariness in an hour, at least of topics which can be talked about with the risk of being overheard. A duet to be agreeable must be to a certain extent confidential, and the dinner-table duet admits of little except generalities, and generalities between two have their limits of entertainment. Then there is the awful possibility that the neighbours at table may have nothing to say to each other; and in the best-selected company one may sit beside a stupid man—that is, stupid for the purpose of a *tête-à-tête*. But this is not the worst of it. No one can talk well without an audience; no one is stimulated to say bright things except by the attention and questioning and interest of other minds. There is little inspiration in side talk to one or two. Nobody ought to go to a dinner who is not a good listener, and, if possible, an intelligent one. To listen with a show of intelligence is a great accomplishment. It is not absolutely essential that there should be a great talker or a number of good talkers at a dinner if all are good listeners, and able to "chip in" a little to the general talk that springs up. For the success of the dinner does not necessarily depend upon the talk being brilliant, but it does depend upon its being general, upon keeping the ball rolling round the table; the old-fashioned game becomes flat when the balls all disappear into private pockets. There

are dinners where the object seems to be to pocket all the balls as speedily as possible. We have learned that that is not the best game; the best game is when you not only depend on the carom, but in going to the cushion before you carom; that is to say, including the whole table, and making things lively. The hostess succeeds who is able to excite this general play of all the forces at the table, even using the silent but non-elastic material as cushions, if one may continue the figure.

Is not this, O brothers and sisters, an evil under the sun, this dinner as it is apt to be conducted? Think of the weary hours you have given to a rite that should be the highest social pleasure! How often when a topic is started that promises well, and might come to something in a general exchange of wit and fancy, and some one begins to speak on it, and speak very well, too, have you not had a lady at your side cut in and give you her views on it—views that might be amusing if thrown out into the discussion, but which are simply impertinent as an interruption! How often when you have tried to get a "rise" out of somebody opposite have you not had your neighbour cut in across you with some private depressing observation to your next neighbour! Private talk at a dinner-table is like private chat at a parlour musical, only it is more fatal to the general enjoyment. There is a notion that the art of conversation, the ability to talk well, has gone out. That is a great mistake. Opportunity is all that is needed. There must be the inspiration of the clash of minds and the encouragement of good listening. In an evening round the fire, when couples begin to whisper or talk low to each other, it is time to put out the lights. Inspiring interest is gone. The most brilliant talker in the world is dumb. People whose idea of a dinner is private talk between seat-neighbours should limit the company to two. They have no right to spoil what can be the most agreeable social institution that civilization has evolved.

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MARK TWAIN

Samuel Langhorne Clemens ("Mark Twain") was born in 1835 in Missouri. He turned from printing to being a Mississippi pilot, and from that to the silver mines of Nevada. From such varied occupations the transition to journalism was natural enough. In 1867 he visited France, Italy, and Palestine, collecting material for his *Innocents Abroad* which made him famous as a humorist. He died in 1910. Among his books are *Tom Sawyer*, *A Tramp Abroad*, *Life on the Mississippi*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Sketches* by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

ABOUT BARBERS

ALL things change except barbers, the ways of barbers, and the surroundings of barbers. These never change. What one experiences in a barber-shop the first time he enters one is what he always experiences in barber-shops afterwards till the end of his days. I got shaved this morning as usual. A man approached the door from Jones Street as I approached it from Main—a thing that always happens. I hurried up, but it was of no use; he entered the door one little step ahead of me, and I followed in on his heels and saw him take the only vacant chair, the one presided over by the best barber. It always happens so. I sat down, hoping that I might fall heir to the chair belonging to the better of the remaining two barbers, for he had already begun combing his man's hair, while his comrade was not yet quite done rubbing up and oiling his customer's locks. I watched the probabilities with strong interest. When I saw that No. 2 was gaining on No. 1 my interest grew to solicitude. When No. 1 stopped a moment to make change on a bath ticket for a new-comer, and lost ground in the race, my solicitude rose to anxiety. When No. 1 caught up again, and both he and his comrade were pulling the towels away and brushing the powder from their customers' cheeks, and it was about an even thing which one would say "Next!" first, my very breath stood still with the suspense. But when at the final culminating moment No. 1 stopped to pass a comb a couple of times through his customer's eyebrows, I saw that he had lost the race by a single instant, and I rose indignant and quitted the shop, to keep from falling into the hands of No. 2; for I have none of that enviable firmness that enables man to look calmly into the eyes of a waiting barber and tell him he will wait for his fellow-barber's chair.

I stayed out fifteen minutes, and then went back, hoping for better luck. Of course all the chairs were occupied now, and four men sat waiting, silent, unsociable, distraught, and looking bored, as men always do who are awaiting their turn in a barber's shop. I sat down in one of the iron-armed compartments of an old sofa, and put in the time for a while, reading the framed advertisements of all sorts of quack nostrums for dyeing and colouring the hair. Then I read the greasy names on the private bay rum bottles; read the names and noted the numbers on the private shaving cups in the pigeon-holes; studied the stained and damaged cheap prints on the walls, of battles, early Presidents, and voluptuous recumbent sultanas, and the tiresome and everlasting young girl putting her grandfather's spectacles on; execrated in my heart the cheerful canary and the distracting parrot that few barber-shops are without. Finally, I searched out the least dilapi-

dated of last year's illustrated papers that littered the foul centre-table, and conned their unjustifiable misrepresentations of old forgotten events.

At last my turn came. A voice said "Next!" and I surrendered to—No. 2, of course. It always happens so. I said meekly that I was in a hurry, and it affected him as strongly as if he had never heard it. He shoved up my head, and put a napkin under it. He ploughed his fingers into my collar and fixed a towel there. He explored my hair with his claws and suggested that it needed trimming. I said I did not want it trimmed. He explored again and said it was pretty long for the present style—better have a little taken off; it needed it behind especially. I said I had had it cut only a week before. He yearned over it reflectively a moment, and then asked, with a disparaging manner, who cut it? I came back at him promptly with a "You did!" I had him there. Then he fell to stirring up his lather and regarding himself in the glass, stopping now and then to get close and examine his chin critically or torture a pimple. Then he lathered one side of my face thoroughly, and was about to lather the other, when a dog-fight attracted his attention, and he ran to the window and stayed and saw it out, losing two shillings on the result in bets with the other barbers, a thing which gave me great satisfaction. He finished lathering, meantime getting the brush into my mouth only twice, and then began to rub in the suds with his hand; and as he now had his head turned, discussing the dog-fight with the other barbers, he naturally shovelled considerable lather into my mouth without knowing it, but I did.

He now began to sharpen his razor on an old suspender, and was delayed a good deal on account of a controversy about a cheap masquerade ball he had figured at the night before, in red cambric and bogus ermine, as some kind of a king. He was so gratified with being chaffed about some damsel whom he had smitten with his charms that he used every means to continue the controversy by pretending to be annoyed at the chaffings of his fellows. This matter begot more surveyings of himself in the glass, and he put down his razor and brushed his hair with elaborate care, plastering an inverted arch of it down on his forehead, accomplishing an accurate "part" behind, and brushing the two wings forward over his ears with nice exactness. In the meantime the lather was drying on my face, and apparently eating into my vitals.

Now he began to shave, digging his fingers into my countenance, to stretch the skin, making a handle of my nose now and then, bundling and tumbling my head this way and that as convenience in shaving demanded, and "hawking" and expectorating pleasantly all the while. As long as he was on the tough sides of my face I did not suffer; but when he began to rake, and rip, and tug at my chin, the tears came.

I did not mind his getting so close down to me; I did not mind his garlic, because all barbers eat garlic, I suppose; but there was an added something that made me fear that he was decaying inwardly while still alive, and this gave me much concern. He now put his finger into my mouth to assist him in shaving the corners of my upper lip, and it was by this bit of circumstantial evidence that I discovered that a part of his duties in the shop was to clean the kerosene lamps. I had often wondered in an indolent way whether the barbers did that, or whether it was the boss.

About this time I was amusing myself trying to guess where he would be most likely to cut me this time, but he got ahead of me, and sliced me on the end of the chin before I had got my mind made up. He immediately sharpened his razor—he might have done it before. I do not like a close shave, and would not let him go over me a second time. I tried to get him to put up his razor, dreading that he would make for the side of my chin, my pet tender spot, a place which a razor cannot touch twice without making trouble; but he said he only wanted to just smooth off one little roughness, and in that same moment he slipped his razor along the forbidden ground, and the dreaded pimple-signs of a close shave rose up smarting and answered to the call. Now he soaked his towel in bay rum, and slapped it all over my face nastily; slapped it over as if a human being ever yet washed his face in that way. Then he dried it by slapping with the dry part of the towel, as if a human being ever dried his face in such a fashion; but a barber seldom rubs you like a Christian. Next he poked bay rum into the cut place with his towel, then choked the wound with powdered starch, then soaked it with bay rum again, and would have gone on soaking and powdering it for evermore, no doubt, if I had not rebelled and begged off. He powdered my whole face now, straightened me up, and began to plough my hair thoughtfully with his hands and examine his fingers critically. Then he suggested a shampoo, and said my hair needed it badly, very badly. I observed that I shampooed it myself very thoroughly in the bath yesterday. I "had him" again. He next recommended some of "Smith's Hair Glorifier," and offered to sell me a bottle. I declined. He praised the new perfume, "Jones's Delight of the Toilet," and proposed to sell me some of that. I declined again. He tendered me a tooth-wash atrocity of his own invention, and when I declined offered to trade knives with me.

He returned to business after the miscarriage of this last enterprise, sprinkled me all over, legs and all, greased my hair in defiance of my protests against it, rubbed and scrubbed a good deal of it out by the roots, and combed and brushed the rest, parting it behind and plastering the eternal inverted arch of hair down on my forehead, and then, while combing my scant eyebrows and defiling them with pomade, strung out an account of the achievements of a six-ounce black and

tan terrier of his till I heard the whistles blow for noon, and knew I was five minutes too late for the train. Then he snatched away the towel, brushed it lightly about my face, passed his comb through my eyebrows once more, and gaily sang out "Next!"

This barber fell down and died of apoplexy two hours later. I am waiting over a day for my revenge—I am going to attend his funeral.

* * *

W. D. HOWELLS

William Dean Howells (1837-1920) stands in the forefront of American realists, having been largely influenced by Tolstoy. After some journalistic work he was appointed consul at Venice where he wrote *Venetian Life*. He contributed to the New York papers and *The Atlantic Monthly* and was editor of the latter from 1872 to 1881. His works include novels, essays, travels, plays, and poems.

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AN EAST-SIDE RAMBLE

THE New Yorkers, following the custom of Europe, often fence themselves about with a great deal of ceremony in social matters, even such small social matters as making calls.

Some ladies have days when they receive calls; others have no specified day, and then you take your chance of being turned from the door without seeing them, or if you find them, of finding them reluctant and preoccupied. A friend of mine says he has often felt as if he had been admitted through the error of the man or the maid who opened the door to him at such houses, and who returned, after carrying up his name, to say, with a frightened air, that the lady would be down in a moment.

But when there are days there is never any misgiving about letting you in. The door is whisked open before you have had time to ring, sometimes by a servant who has the effect of not belonging to the house, but hired for the afternoon. Then you leave your card on a platter of some sort in the hall to attest the fact of your visit, and at the simpler houses find your way into the drawing-room uannounced, though the English custom of shouting your name before you is very common and is always observed where there is any pretence to fashion. Certain ladies receive once a week throughout the season; others receive on some day each week of December or January or February, as the case may be. When there is this limit to a month, the reception

insensibly takes on the character of an afternoon tea, and, in fact, it varies from that only in being a little less crowded. There is tea or chocolate or mild punch and a table spread with pastries and sweets, which hardly anyone touches. A young lady dedicates herself to the service of each urn and offers you the beverage that flows from it. There is a great air of gaiety, a very excited chatter of female voices, a constant flutter of greeting and leave-taking and a general sense of amiable emptiness and bewildered kindness when you come away. The genius of these little affairs is supposed to be informality, but at some houses where you enjoy such informalities you find two men in livery on the steps outside, a third opens the door for you, a fourth takes your hat and stick, a fifth receives your overcoat, and a sixth catches at your name and miscalls it into the drawing-room.

I

But I must not give too exclusive an impression of ceremony in the New Yorkers. I made some calls about Christmas-time last year in a quarter of the city where the informalities are real and where the hospitalities, such as they were, I thought as sincere as in the houses where the informalities are more apparent. The sort of calls I made were rather fashionable some years ago, but are so no longer. It was a fad to make them, and the fad, like all really nice fads, came from England, and perhaps it has now died out here because it has died out there. At any rate, it seems certain that there is now less interest, less curiosity, concerning the home life of the poor than there was then among the comfortable people. I do not say there is less sympathy—there must be still a good deal of sympathy—but I should say there was less hope with the well-to-do of bettering the condition of the ill-to-do; some philosophers even warn us against indulging a feeling of commiseration, lest it should encourage the poor to attempt themselves to better their condition.

Yet there are no signs of rebellion on the part of the poor, whom I found as tame and peaceful, apparently, when I went the rounds of their unceremonious at-homes as the most anxious philosopher could desire. My calls were by no means of the nature of a perquisition, but they left very little unknown to me, I fancy, of the way the poor live, so frank and simple is their life. They included some tenements of the American quarter, near the point of the island, on the West Side, and a rather greater number on the East Side, in the heart of the district abandoned chiefly to the Russian Jews, though there are no doubt other nationalities to be found there. It is said to be more densely populated than any other area in the world, or at least in Christendom, for within a square mile there are more than three hundred and fifty thousand men, women, and children. One can imagine from this

fact alone how they are housed and what their chances of the comforts and decencies of life may be. But I must not hurry to the region of these homes before I have first tried to show the interiors of that quarter called American, where I found the Americans represented, as they are so often, by Irish people. The friend who went with me on my calls led me across the usual surface tracks, under the usual elevated tracks, and suddenly dodged before me into an alley-way about two feet wide. This crept under houses fronting on the squalid street we had left and gave into a sort of court some ten or twelve feet wide by thirty or forty feet long. The buildings surrounding it were low and very old. One of them was a stable, which contributed its stench to the odours that rose from the reeking pavement and from the closets filling an end of the court, with a corner left beside them for the hydrant that supplied the water of the whole inclosure. It is from this court that the inmates of the tenements have their sole chance of sun and air. What the place must be in summer I had not the heart to think, and on the wintry day of my visit I could not feel the fury of the skies which my guide said would have been evident to me if I had seen it in August. I could better fancy this when I climbed the rickety stairs within one of the houses and found myself in a typical New York tenement. Then I almost choked at the thought of what a hot day, what a hot night, must be in such a place, with the two small windows inhaling the putrid breath of the court and transmitting it, twice fouled by the passage through the living-room, to the black hole in the rear, where the whole family lay on the heap of rags that passed for a bed.

We had our choice which door to knock at on the narrow landing, a yard wide at most, which opened into such tenements to the right and left, as many stories up as the stairs mounted. We stood at once in the presence of the hostess; there was no ceremony of sending in our cards here, or having our names called to her. In one case we found her over the wash-tub, with her three weeks' babe bundled in a chair beside it. A table, with a half-eaten loaf, that formed her breakfast, on it, helped, with the cooking-stove, to crowd the place past any possibility of sitting down, if there had been chairs to sit in; so we stood, as people do at an afternoon tea. At sight of us the woman began to cry and complain that her man had been drunk and idle for a month and did nothing for her; though in these times he might have been sober and idle and done as little. Some good soul was paying the rent for her, which was half as great as would have hired a decent flat in a good part of the town; but how her food came or the coal for her stove remained a mystery which we did not try to solve. She wiped her tears at the exhibition of a small coin, which she had perhaps dimly foreseen through them from the moment they began to flow. It was wrong, perhaps, to give her money, but it was not very wrong, per-

haps, for the money was not very much, and if it pauperized her it could not have been said that she was wholly unpauperized before she took it. These are very difficult cases, but all life is a hopless tangle, and the right is something that does not show itself at once, especially in economical affairs.

In another tenement we found a family as gay and hopeful as this was dismal and desperate. An Irish lady with a stylish fringe of red hair decorating her forehead, welcomed us with excuses for the state of the apartment, which in the next breath she proved herself very proud of, for she said that if people were not comfortable in their houses it was because they were slovenly and untidy. I could not see that she was neater than her neighbour on the landing below. She had a florid taste in pictures, and half a dozen large coloured prints went far to hide the walls, which, she said, the landlord had lately had whitewashed, though to eyes less fond than hers they showed a livid blue. The whitewashing was the sole repairs which had been put upon her tenement since she came into it, but she seemed to think it quite enough; and her man, who sat at leisure near the stove, in the three days' beard which seems inseparable from idly poverty, was quite boastful of its advantages. He said that he had lived in that court for thirty years and there was no such air anywhere else in this world. I could readily believe him, being there to smell it and coming away with the taste of it in my mouth. Like other necessaries of life, it must have been rather scanty in that happy home, especially at night, when the dark fell outside and a double dark thickened in the small bin which stood open to our gaze at the end of the room. The whitewash seemed not to have penetrated to this lair, where a frowsy mattress showed itself on a rickety bedstead. The beds in these sleeping-holes were never made up; they were rounded into a heap and seemed commonly of a coarse brown sacking. They had always a horrible fascination for me. I fancied them astir with a certain life which, if there had been a consensus of it to that effect, might have walked off with them.

All the tenements here were of this size and shape—a room with windows opening upon the court and at the rear the small black bin or pen for the bed. The room was perhaps twelve feet square and the bin was six, and for such a dwelling the tenant pays six dollars a month. If he fails to pay it he is evicted, and some thirty thousand evictions have taken place in the past year. But an eviction is by no means the dreadful hardship the reader would perhaps imagine it. To be sure, it means putting the tenant on the sidewalk with his poor household gear in any weather and at any hour; but if it is very cold or very wet weather, the evicted family is seldom suffered to pass the night there. The wretched neighbours gather about and take them in, and their life begins again on the old terms; or the charities come to

their aid, and they are dispersed into the different refuges until the father or mother can find another hole for them to crawl into. Still, natural as it all is, I should think it must surprise an Irishman, who supposed he had left eviction behind him in his native land, to find it so rife in the country of his adoption.

II

My friend asked me if I would like to go into any other tenements, but I thought that if what I had seen was typical, I had seen enough in that quarter. The truth is, I had not yet accustomed myself to going in upon people in that way, though they seemed accustomed to being gone in upon without any ceremony but the robust "Good morning!" my companion gave them by way of accounting for our presence, and I wanted a little interval to prepare myself for further forays. The people seemed quite ready to be questioned, and answered us as persons in authority. They may have taken us for detectives, or agents of benevolent societies, or journalists in search of copy. In any case, they had nothing to lose and they might have something to gain; so they received us kindly and made us as much at home among them as they knew how. It may have been that in some instances they supposed that we were members of the Board of Health and were their natural allies against their landlords.

I had not realized how much this noble institution can befriend the poor, so potently sustained as it is in the discharge of its duties by the popular sentiment in a land where popular sentiment is so often so weak. It has full power, in the public interest, to order repairs and betterments necessary for the general health in any domicile, rich or poor, in the city, and no man's pleasure or profit may hinder it. In cases of contagion or infection, it may isolate the neighbourhood or vacate the premises, or, in certain desperate conditions, destroy them. As there are always pestilences of some sort preying upon the poor (as if their poverty were not enough), my companion could point out a typhus quarter, which the Board had shut up, and which we must not approach. Such minor plagues as small-pox, scarlet-fever, and diphtheria, are quickly discovered and made known, and the places that they have infested are closed till they can be thoroughly purified. Any tenant believing his premises to be in an unwholesome or dangerous state may call in the Board, and from its decision the landlord has no appeal. He must make the changes the Board ordains; and he must make them at his own cost, though no doubt, when the tenant can pay, he contrives somehow to make him pay in the end. The landlord, especially if he battens on the poorer sort of tenants, is always in fear of the Board, and the tenant is in love with it, for he knows that, in a community otherwise delivered over to the pursuit of pelf

or pleasure, it stands his ready friend, whose mandate private interest obeys as it obeys no other. It seems to have more honour than any other institution among us, and, amid the most frightful corruption of every kind, to remain incorruptible. Very likely the landlord may sometimes think that it abuses its power, but the tenant never thinks so, and the public seems always to agree with the tenant. The press, which is so keen to scent out paternalism in municipal or national affairs, has not yet perceived any odour of it in the Board of Health, and stands its constant friend, though it embodies in the most distinctive form the principle that, in a civilized community, the collective interests is supreme. Even if such an extension of its powers were not in the order of evolution, it would not be so illogical for the Board of Health to command the abatement of poverty when the diseases that flow from poverty cannot be otherwise abated. I should not like to prophesy that it will ever do so, but stranger things have happened through the necessity that knows no law, not even the law of demand and supply—the demand of Moloch and the supply of Misery.

III

I do not know whether the Hebrew quarter, when I began to make my calls there, seemed any worse than the American quarter or not. But I noticed presently a curious subjective effect in myself, which I offer for the reader's speculation.

There is something in a very little experience of such places that blunts the perception, so that they do not seem so dreadful as they are; and I should feel as if I were exaggerating if I recorded my first impression of their loathsomeness. I soon came to look upon the conditions as normal, not for me, indeed, or for the kind of people I mostly consort with, but for the inmates of the dens and lairs about me. Perhaps this was partly their fault; they were uncomplaining, if not patient, in circumstances where I believe a single week's sojourn, with no more hope of a better lot than they could have, would make anarchists of the best people in the city. Perhaps the poor people themselves are not so thoroughly persuaded that there is anything very unjust in their fate, as the compassionate think. They at least do not know the better fortune of others, and they have the habit of passively enduring their own. I found them usually cheerful in the Hebrew quarter, and they had so much courage as enabled them to keep themselves noticeably clean in an environment where I am afraid their betters would scarcely have had heart to wash their faces and comb their hair. There was even a decent tidiness in their dress, which I did not find very ragged, though it often seemed unseasonable and insufficient. But here again, as in many other phases of life, I was struck by men's heroic superiority to their fate, if their fate is

hard; and I felt anew that if prosperous and comfortable people were as good in proportion to their fortune as these people were they would be as the angels of light, which, I am afraid they now but faintly resemble.

One of the places we visited was a court somewhat like that we had already seen in the American quarter, but rather smaller and with more the effect of a pit, since the walls around it were so much higher. There was the same row of closets at one side and the hydrant next them, but here the hydrant was bound up in rags to keep it from freezing, apparently, and the wretched place was by no means so foul under foot. To be sure, there was no stable to contribute its filth, but we learned that a suitable stench was not wanting from a bakery in one of the basements, which a man in good clothes and a large watch-chain told us arose from it in suffocating fumes at a certain hour, when the baker was doing some unimaginable thing to the bread. This man seemed to be the employer of labour in one of the rooms above, and he said that when the smell began they could hardly breathe. He caught promptly at the notion of the Board of Health, and I dare say that the baker will be duly abated. None of the other people complained, but that was perhaps because they had only their Yiddish to complain in, and knew that it would be wasted on us. They seemed neither curious nor suspicious concerning us; they let us go everywhere, as if they had no thought of hindering us. One of the tenements we entered had just been vacated; but there was a little girl of ten there, with some smaller children, amusing them in the empty space. Through a public-spirited boy, who had taken charge of us from the beginning and had a justly humorous sense of the situation, we learned that this little maid was not the sister but the servant of the others, for even in these low levels society makes its distinctions. I dare say that the servant was not suffered to eat with the others when they had anything to eat, and that when they had nothing her inferiority was somehow brought home to her. She may have been made to wait and famish after the others had hungered some time. She was a cheerful and friendly creature and her small brood were kept tidy like herself.

The basement under this vacant tenement we found inhabited, and though it was a most preposterous place for people to live, it was not as dirty as one would think. To be sure, it was not very light and all the dirt may not have been visible. One of the smiling women who were there made their excuses, "Poor people; cannot keep very nice," and laughed as if she had said a good thing. There was nothing in the room but a table and a few chairs and a stove, without fire, but they were all contentedly there together in the dark, which hardly let them see one another's faces. My companion struck a match and held it to the cavernous mouth of an inner cellar half as large as the room we were in, where it winked and paled so soon that I had only a glimpse

of the bed, with the rounded heap of bedding on it; but out of this hole, as if she had been a rat, scared from it by the light, a young girl came, rubbing her eyes and vaguely smiling, and vanished upstairs somewhere.

IV

I found no shape or size of tenement but this. There was always the one room, where the inmates lived by day, and the one den, where they slept by night, apparently all in the same bed, though probably the children were strewn about the floor. If the tenement were high up the living-room had more light and air than if it were low down; but the sleeping-hole never had any light or air of its own. My calls were made on one of the mild days which fell before last Christmas, and so I suppose I saw these places at their best; but what they must be when the summer is seven times heated without, as it often is in New York, or when the Arctic cold had pierced these hapless abodes and the inmates huddle together for their animal heat, the reader must imagine for himself. The Irish-Americans had flaming stoves, even on that soft day, but in the Hebrew tenements I found no fire. They were doubtless the better for this, and it is one of the comical anomalies of the whole affair that they are singularly healthy. The death-rate among them is one of the lowest in the city, though whether for their final advantage it might not better be the highest, is one of the things one must not ask one's self. In their presence I should not dare to ask it, even in my deepest thought. They are then so like other human beings, and really so little different from the best, except in their environment, that I had to get away from this before I could regard them as wild beasts.

I suppose there are and have been worse conditions of life, but if I stopped short of savage life I found it hard to imagine them. I did not exaggerate to myself the squalor that I saw, and I do not exaggerate it to the reader. As I have said, I was so far from sentimentalizing it that I almost immediately reconciled myself to it, as far as its victims were concerned. Still, it was squalor of a kind which, it seemed to me, it could not be possible to outrival anywhere in the life one commonly calls civilized. It is true that the Indians who formerly inhabited this island were no more comfortably lodged in their wigwams of bark and skins than these poor New Yorkers in their tenements. But the wild men pay no rent, and if they are crowded together upon terms that equally forbid decency and comfort in their shelter, they have the freedom of the forest and the prairie about them; they have the illimitable sky and the whole light of day and the four winds to breathe when they issue into the open air. The New York tenement dwellers, even when they leave their lairs, are still pent in their high-walled

streets, and inhale a thousand stenches of their own and others' making. The street, except in snow and rain, is always better than their horrible houses, and it is doubtless because they pass so much of their time in the street that the death-rate is so low among them. Perhaps their domiciles can be best likened for darkness and discomfort to the dugouts or sod-huts of the settlers on the great plains. But these are only temporary shelters, while the tenement dwellers have no hope of better housing; they have neither the prospect of a happier fortune through their own energy as the settlers have, nor any chance from the humane efforts and teaching of missionaries, like the savages. With the tenement dwellers it is from generation to generation, if not for the individual, then for the class, since no one expects that there will not always be tenement dwellers in New York as long as our present economical conditions endure.

V

When I first set out on my calls I provided myself with some small silver, which I thought I might fitly give, at least to the children, and in some of the first places I did this. But presently I began to fancy an unseemliness in it, as if it were an indignity added to the hardship of their lot, and to feel that unless I gave all my worldly wealth to them I was in a manner mocking their misery. I could not give everything, for then I should have had to come upon charity myself, and so I mostly kept my little coins in my pocket; but when we mounted into the court again from the cellar apartment and found an old, old woman there, wrinkled and yellow, with twinkling eyes and a toothless smile, waiting to see us, as if she were as curious in her way as we were in ours, I was tempted. She said in her Yiddish, which the humorous boy interpreted, that she was eighty years old, and she looked a hundred, while she babbled unintelligibly but very cheerfully on. I gave her a piece of twenty-five cents and she burst into a blessing, that I should not have thought could be bought for money. We did not stay to hear it out, but the boy did, and he followed to report it to me, with a gleeful interest in its beneficent exaggerations. If it is fulfilled I shall live to be a man of many and prosperous years, and I shall die possessed of wealth that will endow a great many colleges and found a score of libraries. I do not know whether the boy envied me or not, but I wish I could have left that benediction to him, for I took a great liking to him, his shrewd smile, his gay eyes, his promise of a Hebrew nose, and his whole wise little visage. He said that he went to school and studied reading, writing, geography, and everything. All the children we spoke to said that they went to school, and they were quick and intelligent. They could mostly speak English, while most of their elders knew only Yiddish.

The sound of this was around us on the street we issued into, and which seemed from end to end a vast bazaar, where there was a great deal of selling, whether there was much buying or not. The place is humorously called the pig-market by the Christians, because everything in the world but pork is to be found there. To me its activity was a sorrowfully amusing satire upon the business ideal of our plutocratic civilization. These people were desperately poor, yet they preyed upon one another in their commerce, as if they could be enriched by selling dear or buying cheap. So far as I could see, they would only impoverish each other more and more, but they trafficked as eagerly as if there were wealth in every bargain. The sidewalks and the roadways were thronged with pedlars and purchasers, and everywhere I saw splendid types of that old Hebrew world which had the sense if not the knowledge of God when all the rest of us lay sunk in heathen darkness. There were women with oval faces and olive tints, and clear, dark eyes, relucent as evening pools, and men with long beards of jetty black or silvery white, and the noble profiles of their race. I said to myself that it was among such throngs that Christ walked, it was from such people that He chose His disciples and His friends; but I looked in vain for Him in Hester Street. Probably He was at that moment in Fifth Avenue.

VI

After all, I was loath to come away. I should have liked to stay and live awhile with such as they, if the terms of their life had been possible, for there were phases of it that were very attractive. That constant meeting and that neighbourly intimacy were, superficially at least, of a very pleasant effect, and though the whole place seemed abandoned to mere trade, it may have been a necessity of the case, for I am told that many of these Hebrews have another ideal, and think and vote in the hope that the land of their refuge shall yet some day keep its word to the world, so that men shall be equally free in it to the pursuit of happiness. I suppose they are mostly fugitives from the Russian persecution, and that from the cradle their days must have been full of fear and care, and from the time they could toil that they must have toiled at whatever their hands found to do. Yet they had not the look of a degraded people; they were quiet and orderly, and I saw none of the drunkenness or the truculence of an Irish or low American neighbourhood among them. There were no policemen in sight, and the quiet behaviour that struck me so much seemed not to have been enforced. Very likely they may have moods different from that I saw, but I only tell of what I saw, and I am by no means ready yet to preach poverty as a saving grace. Though they seemed so patient and even cheerful in some cases, I do not think it is well for human

beings to live whole families together in one room with a kennel out of it, where modesty may survive, but decency is impossible. Neither do I think they can be the better men and women for being insufficiently clothed and fed, though so many of us appear none the better for being housed in palaces and clad in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day.

I have tried to report simply and honestly what I saw of the life of our poorest people that day. One might say it was not so bad as it is painted, but I think it is quite as bad as it appeared; and I could not see that in itself or in its conditions it held the promise or the hope of anything better. If it is tolerable it must endure; if it is intolerable, still it must endure. Here and there one will release himself from it, and doubtless numbers are always doing this, as in the days of slavery there were always fugitives; but for the great mass the captivity remains. Upon the present terms of leaving the poor to be housed by private landlords, whose interest it is to get the greatest return of money for the money invested, the very poorest must always be housed as they are now. Nothing but public control in some form or other can secure them a shelter fit for human beings.

* * *

JOHN BURROUGHS

JOHN BURROUGHS (1837-1921) has been termed "a more polished but tamer Thoreau." After living on a farm he spent some years in teaching, journalism, and clerical work. In 1874 he found congenial environment on a farm and occupied himself with literature and fruit-growing when he was not engaged in his duties as a bank examiner. His books include *Wake Robin*, *Winter Sunshine*, *Birds and Poets*, *Locusts and Wild Honey*, *Signs and Seasons*, and *Literary Values*.

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BITS OF CRITICISM

THE difference between a precious stone and a common stone is not an essential difference—not a difference of substance, but of arrangement of the particles—the crystallization. In substance the charcoal and the diamond are one, but in form and effect how widely they differ. The pearl contains nothing that is not found in the coarsest oyster-shell.

Two men have the same thoughts; they use about the same words in expressing them; yet with one the product is real literature, with the other it is a platitude.

The difference is all in the presentation; a finer and more compendious process has gone on in the one case than in the other. The elements are better fused and knitted together; they are in some way heightened and intensified. Is not here a clue to what we mean by style? Style transforms common quartz into an Egyptian pebble. We are apt to think of style as something external, that can be put on, something in and of itself. But it is not; it is in the inmost texture of the substance itself. Polish, choice words, faultless rhetoric, are only the accidents of style. Indeed, perfect workmanship is one thing; style, as the great writers have it, is quite another. It may, and often does, go with faulty workmanship. It is the use of words in a fresh and vital way, so as to give us a vivid sense of a new spiritual force and personality. In the best work the style is found and hidden in the matter.

I heard a reader observe, after finishing one of Robert Louis Stevenson's books, "How well it is written!" I thought it a doubtful compliment. It should have been so well written that the reader would not have been conscious of the writing at all. If we could only get the writing, the craft, out of our stories and essays and poems, and make the reader feel he was face to face with the real thing! The complete identification of the style with the thought; the complete absorption of the man with his matter, so that the reader shall say, "How good, how real, how true!" that is the great success. Seek ye the kingdom of truth first, and all things shall be added. I think we do feel, with regard to some of Stevenson's books, like *An Inland Voyage, Travels with a Donkey,* etc., how well they are written. Certainly one would not have the literary skill any less, but would have one's attention kept from it by the richness of the matter. Hence I think a British critic hits the mark when he says Stevenson lacks homeliness.

Dr. Holmes wrote fine and eloquent poems, yet I think one does not feel that he is essentially a poet. His work has not the inevitableness of nature; it is a skilful literary feat; we admire it, but seldom return to it. His poetry is a stream in an artificial channel; his natural channel is his prose; here we get his freest and most spontaneous activity.

One fault that I find with our younger and more promising school of novelists is that their aim is too literary; we feel that they are striving mainly for artistic effects. Do we feel this at all in Scott, Dickens, Hawthorne, or Tolstoi? These men are not thinking about art but about life; how to reproduce life. In essayists like Pater, Wilde, Lang, the same thing occurs; we are constantly aware of the literary artist; they are not in love with life, reality, so much as they are with words, style, literary effects. Their seriousness is mainly an artistic seriousness. It is not so much that they have something to say, as that they are filled with a desire to say something. Nearly all our magazine poets seem filled with the same desire; what labour, what art and technique;

but what a dearth of feeling and spontaneity! I read a few lines or stanzas and then stop. I see it is only deft handicraft, and that the heart and soul are not in it. One day my boy killed what an old hunter told him was a mock duck. It looked like a duck, it acted like a duck, it quacked like a duck, but when it came upon the table—it mocked us. These mock poems of the magazines remind me of it.

Is it not unfair to take any book, certainly any great piece of literature, and deliberately sit down to pass judgment upon it? Great books are not addressed to the critical judgment, but to the life, the soul. They need to slide into one's life earnestly, and find him with his guard down, his doors open, his attitude disinterested. The reader is to give himself to them, as they give themselves to him; there must be self-sacrifice. We find the great books when we are young, eager, receptive. After we grow hard and critical we find few great books. A recent French critic says: "It seems to me works of art are not made to be judged, but to be loved, to please, to dissipate the cares of real life. It is precisely by wishing to judge that one loses sight of their true significance."

"How can a man learn to know himself?" inquires Goethe. "Never by reflection, only by action." Is not this a half-truth? One can only learn his powers of action by action, and his powers of thought by thinking. He can only learn whether or not he has power to command, to lead, to be an orator or legislator, by actual trial. Has he courage, self-control, self-denial, fortitude, etc.? In life alone can he find out. Action tests his moral virtues, reflection his intellectual. If he would define himself to himself he must think. "We are weak in action," says Renan, "by our best qualities; we are strong in action by will and a certain one-sidedness." "The moment Byron reflects," says Goethe, "he is a child." Byron had no self-knowledge. We have all known people who were ready and sure in action who did not know themselves at all. Your weakness or strength as a person comes out in action; your weakness or strength as an intellectual force comes out in reflection.

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HENRY JAMES

HENRY JAMES (1843-1916) was born in New York. His father was a well-known theological writer. After studying law at Harvard Henry James settled in England in 1871, becoming a naturalized British subject in 1915 and receiving the Order of Merit in the following year. His novels and short stories include *Daisy Miller*, *The Other House*, *What Maisie Knew*, *The Turn of the Screw*, and *The Golden Bowl*. He was an able critic as is shown by the volumes *French Poets and Novelists*, *Partial Portraits*, *Hawthorne*, and *Notes*

on Novelists. Other works are *Portraits of Places, A Little Town in France, English Hours, Italian Hours,* and *The American Scene.*

The following essay is taken from *Essays in London and Elsewhere* by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF LONDON

THERE is a certain evening that I count as virtually a first impression—the end of a wet, black Sunday, twenty years ago, about the first of March. There had been an earlier vision, but it had turned grey, like faded ink, and the occasion I speak of was a fresh beginning. No doubt I had a mystic prescience of how fond of the murky modern Babylon I was one day to become; certain it is that as I look back I find every small circumstance of those hours of approach and arrival still as vivid as if the solemnity of an opening era had breathed upon it. The sense of approach was already almost intolerably strong at Liverpool, where, as I remember, the perception of the English character of everything was as acute as a surprise, though it could only be a surprise without a shock. It was expectation exquisitely gratified, superabundantly confirmed. There was a kind of wonder indeed that England should be as English as, for my entertainment, she took the trouble to be; but the wonder would have been greater, and all the pleasure absent, if the sensation had not been violent. It seems to sit there again like a visiting presence, as it sat opposite to me at breakfast at a small table in a window of the old coffee-room of the Adelphi Hotel—the unextended (as it then was), the unimproved, the unblushingly local Adelphi. Liverpool is not a romantic city, but that smoky Saturday returns to me as a supreme success, measured by its association with the kind of emotion in the hope of which, for the most part, we betake ourselves to far countries.

It assumed this character at an early hour—or rather indeed twenty-four hours before—with the sight, as one looked across the wintry ocean, of the strange, dark, lonely freshness of the coast of Ireland. Better still, before we could come up to the city, were the black steamers knocking about in the yellow Mersey, under a sky so low that they seemed to touch it with their funnels, and in the thickest, windiest light. Spring was already in the air, in the town; there was no rain, but there was still less sun—one wondered what had become, on this side of the world, of the big white splotch in the heavens; and the grey mildness, shading away into black at every pretext, appeared in itself a promise. This was how it hung about me, between the window and the fire, in the coffee-room of the hotel—late in the morning for breakfast, as we had been long disembarking. The other passengers had dispersed, knowingly catching trains for London (we had

only been a handful); I had the place to myself, and I felt as if I had an exclusive property in the impression. I prolonged it, I sacrificed to it, and it is perfectly recoverable now, with the very taste of the national muffin, the creak of the waiter's shoes as he came and went (could anything be so English as his intensely professional back? it revealed a country of tradition), and the rustle of the newspaper I was too excited to read.

I continued to sacrifice for the rest of the day; it didn't seem to me a sentient thing, as yet, to inquire into the means of getting away. My curiosity must indeed have languished, for I found myself on the morrow in the slowest of Sunday trains, pottering up to London with an interruptedness which might have been tedious without the conversation of an old gentleman who shared the carriage with me and to whom my alien as well as comparatively youthful character had betrayed itself. He instructed me as to the sights of London, and impressed upon me that nothing was more worthy of my attention than the great cathedral of St. Paul. "Have you seen St. Peter's in Rome? St. Peter's is more highly embellished, you know; but you may depend upon it that St. Paul's is the better building of the two." The impression I began with speaking of was, strictly, that of the drive from Euston, after dark, to Morley's Hotel in Trafalgar Square. It was not lovely—it was in fact rather horrible; but as I move again through dusky, tortuous miles, in the greasy four-wheeler to which my luggage had compelled me to commit myself, I recognize the first step in an initiation of which the subsequent stages were to abound in pleasant things. It is a kind of humiliation in a great city not to know where you are going, and Morley's Hotel was then, to my imagination, only a vague ruddy spot in the general immensity. The immensity was the great fact, and that was a charm; the miles of housetops and viaducts, the complication of junctions and signals through which the train made its way to the station had already given me the scale. The weather had turned to wet, and we went deeper and deeper into the Sunday night. The sheep in the fields, on the way from Liverpool, had shown in their demeanour a certain consciousness of the day; but this momentous cab-drive was an introduction to rigidities of custom. The low black houses were as inanimate as so many rows of coal-scuttles, save where at frequent corners, from a gin-shop, there was a flare of light more brutal still than the darkness. The custom of gin—that was equally rigid, and in this first impression the public-houses counted for much.

Morley's Hotel proved indeed to be a ruddy spot; brilliant, in my recollection, is the coffee-room fire, the hospitable mahogany, the sense that in the stupendous city this, at any rate for the hour, was a shelter and a point of view. My remembrance of the rest of the evening—I was probably very tired—is mainly a remembrance of a vast four-

poster. My little bedroom-candle, set in its deep basin, caused this monument to project a huge shadow and to make me think, I scarce knew why, of *The Ingoldsby Legends*. If at a tolerably early hour the next day I found myself approaching St. Paul's, it was not wholly in obedience to the old gentleman in the railway-carriage: I had an errand in the City, and the City was doubtless prodigious. But what I mainly recall is the romantic consciousness of passing under Temple Bar and the way two lines of *Henry Esmond* repeated themselves in my mind as I drew near the masterpiece of Sir Christopher Wren. "The stout, red-faced woman" whom Esmond had seen tearing after the staghounds over the slopes at Windsor was not a bit like the effigy "which turns its stony back upon St. Paul's and faces the coaches struggling up Ludgate Hill." As I looked at Queen Anne over the apron of my hansom—she struck me as very small and dirty, and the vehicle ascended the mild incline without an effort—it was a thrilling thought that the statue had been familiar to the hero of the incomparable novel. All history appeared to live again and the continuity of things to vibrate through my mind.

To this hour, as I pass along the Strand, I take again the walk I took there that afternoon. I love the place to-day, and that was the commencement of my passion. It appeared to me to present phenomena, and to contain objects, of every kind, of an inexhaustible interest: in particular it struck me as desirable and even indispensable that I should purchase most of the articles in most of the shops. My eyes rest with a certain tenderness on the places where I resisted and on those where I succumbed. The fragrance of Mr. Rimmel's establishment is again in my nostrils; I see the slim young lady (I hear her pronunciation), who waited upon me there. Sacred to me to-day is the particular aroma of the hairwash that I bought of her. I paused before the granite portico of Exeter Hall (it was unexpectedly narrow and wedge-like), and it evokes a cloud of associations which are none the less impressive because they are vague; coming from I don't know where—from *Punch*, from Thackeray, from old volumes of *The Illustrated London News* turned over in childhood; seeming connected with Mrs. Beecher Stowe and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Memorable is a rush I made into a glover's at Charing Cross—the one you pass going eastward, just before you turn into the station; that, however, now that I think of it, must have been in the morning, as soon as I issued from the hotel. Keen within me was a sense of the importance of deflowering, of despoiling the shop.

A day or two later, in the afternoon, I found myself staring at my fire, in a lodging of which I had taken possession on foreseeing that I should spend some weeks in London. I had just come in, and, having attended to the distribution of my luggage, sat down to consider my habitation. It was on the ground-floor, and the fading daylight reached

it in a sadly damaged condition. It struck me as stuffy and unsocial, with its mouldy smell and its decoration of lithographs and wax-flowers—an impersonal black hole in the huge general blackness. The uproar of Piccadilly hummed away at the end of the street, and the rattle of a heartless hansom passed close to my ears. A sudden horror of the whole place came over me, like a tiger-pounce of homesickness which had been watching its moment. London was hideous, vicious, cruel, and above all overwhelming; whether or no she was "careful of the type" she was as indifferent as nature herself to the single life. In the course of an hour I should have to go out to my dinner, which was not supplied on the premises, and that effort assumed the form of a desperate and dangerous quest. It appeared to me that I would rather remain dinnerless, would rather even starve than sally forth into the infernal town, where the natural fate of an obscure stranger would be to be trampled to death in Piccadilly and his carcass thrown into the Thames. I did not starve, however, and I eventually attached myself by a hundred human links to the dreadful, delightful city. That momentary vision of its smeared face and stony heart has remained memorable to me, but I am happy to say that I can easily summon up others.

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BRANDER MATTHEWS

James Brander Matthews was born at New Orleans in 1852. After a course at Columbia University he was admitted to the bar in 1873, but he soon relinquished the law for literature. He has been a professor at Columbia since 1892. His works include *French Dramatists of the Nineteenth Century*, *The Story of a Story*, *Studies of the Stage*, *Vignettes of Manhattan*, *The Historical Novel*, *The Philosophy of the Short Story*, and *Essays on English*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Pen and Ink* by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd.

ON THE ANTIQUITY OF JESTS

THERE are not a few very interesting and instructive books waiting to be written. Two goodly tomes there are, for example, which I am anxious to own—the *Anecdote History of Private Theatricals*, and *A Historical Treatise on Scene-Painting and Stage-Mechanism*. Unfortunately nobody has yet thought it worth his while to write either of them, though it would be difficult to find anywhere two books about the stage more entertaining, more useful, and easier to put together. But a book which I would receive with more welcome

and review more willingly even than these is the *Authentic Jest-Book,* "chronologically arranged, and with exact references to the original authorities and a collation of the parallel passages in other authors." It may be thought that of jest-books we have a many, and that, at best, they are but dreary reading. And so it is. But the *Authentic Jest-Book* is wholly unlike any other collection of jokes and gibes and repartees and witticisms; it is unlike them all, and better than any of them. In the ordinary gathering of merry jests, whether it be the collection of Hierocles, the Greek, or of Abou-na-wass, the Persian, whether it be the *Moyen de Parvenir,* the compilation of some contemporary of Rabelais, or the *Gesta Romanorum* growing together in monkish hands, whether it be the humorous anthology of the worthy Poggio or that credited to the unworthy Joseph Miller, in any and all of the recognized receptacles of the waifs and strays of wit and humour, there is one marked, permanent, and fatal defect; the most of the jokes are unidentified and unauthenticated; they are set down as they were familiar in men's mouths at the time when Poggio and Hierocles and the double of Joseph Miller and their fellows went about taking notes. In other words, no effort has been made hitherto to show the genesis of jests, and to declare with precision and with authority just when a given joke was first made and just what transformation and adventures it has since undergone.

The jest-book I want is one giving chapter and verse for every laugh of it. In *L'Esprit dans l'Histoire* and in *L'Esprit des Autres,* Edouard Fournier made an attempt along the right path; and he was followed aptly and promptly by Mr. Hayward in the essay on the *Pearls and Mock-Pearls of History.* Fournier and Hayward succeeded in showing that many an accepted witticism is a very Proteus, reappearing again and again with a change of face. Other jokes are, like Cagliostro, turning up once in a century quite as young as ever. There is, for instance a story told by Lord Stair, called the politest man in France—because he obeyed the king's request and jumped into the royal carriage before his majesty. Lord Stair bore a singular resemblance to Louis XIV, who was moved to ask him if Lord Stair's mother had ever been to Paris; to which Lord Stair replied, "No, your majesty, but my father has." The same story is told of Henri IV and a certain gentleman of Gascony. It can be found in Macrobius, where it is related of a general who came from Spain to the court of the Cæsars. Now, in the *Authentic Jest-Book,* this anecdote would reappear in an English translation of the exact words of Macrobius, with a note setting forth the revival of the retort under Henri IV and Louis XIV: no doubt it has been told of many another monarch who was the father of his people in the fashion of the *roi vert-galant.* Moore, as in duty bound, sets down Sheridan's light-hearted jest while he watched the burning of Drury Lane Theatre from the coffee-house

where he was sipping a glass of sherry—"Surely a man may take a glass of wine at his own fireside!" This is a saying quite worthy of Sheridan, and one which he was quite capable of making; but Moore, with a wise scepticism, suggested that it "may have been, for aught I know, like the Wandering Jew, a regular attendant upon all fires since the time of Hierocles."

There is, indeed, a metempsychosis of professional jokes. A merry jest about a preacher or a player or a physician is reincarnated in every generation. It is like royalty, it never dies—*Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!* Garrick's death eclipses the gaiety of nations, but the stroke of humour which told for or against Garrick soon tells for or against Grimaldi. By a sort of apostolic succession, the anecdotes about a popular clergyman pass to the clergyman who succeeds him in popularity. Two of these perennial tales—one about a player, and the other about a preacher—have had an exceptionally strong hold on life. In the first a severe hypochondriac consults a physician, who advises recreation: "You should see Liston!" "I am Liston!" answers the severe hypochondriac. This is told of Grimaldi and of many another comic performer before and since his time. The earliest instance I have been able to find is in connexion with Dominique, the famous Arlequin of the Comédie-Italienne under Louis XIV. Arlequin Dominique was ready of speech, as an anecdote proves which has yet only one hero: the monarch was fond of the mimic, and seeing him thirsty one day, bade a servant give him a goblet filled to the brim. Now the goblet was of gold, so Arlequin slyly queried, "And the wine, too, your majesty?" But this is a digression.

The second story relates to a certain popular preacher, who on a sultry summer morning arose in his pulpit and wiped his forehead and said, "It is damned hot!" And when the congregation were properly shocked into wakefulness, he said, "Such were the words which met my ears this morning as I entered this house of worship!" and then he proceeded to preach a vigorous sermon against the sin of profanity. In the article which an important London weekly devoted to the celebration of Mr. Spurgeon's fifty years of ministry, this saying and this sermon were placed in the mouth of Mr. Spurgeon. In the United States Mr. Henry Ward Beecher was generally supposed to have said them—there are not wanting those who declare that they heard him—in spite of the eloquent protests and denial of his sister, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. But Rowland Hill preceded both Mr. Beecher and Mr. Spurgeon as the protagonist of this little sacred play; and Robert Hall had appeared in the part before Rowland Hill. Who the real originator may be will not be known with certainty until the *Authentic Jest-Book* appears.

One class of anecdote should be excluded scrupulously from my model collection. It is the anecdote unvouched for by a recognizable

proper name as one of the *dramatis personae*. It is the anecdote which relates us the *faits et gestes* of "a certain Oxford scholar" or "a well-known wit" or "a foolish fellow." These anonymous tales are as unworthy of credence as an anonymous letter. A merry jest ought always to be accompanied by the name of the hero, necessarily for publication and as a guarantee of good faith. When the tale is tagged to a man whose name we know, investigation is possible and we may get at the truth. But these nameless stories are of no country and of no century—rather are they of all nations and of all times. It has been well said that Irish bulls were calves in Greece. There is a familiar Irish anecdote, not to be told here, though innocent enough, which turns on the continuance of the pattering of the rain-drops. This was confided to me a few years ago in America as the latest importation from the Emerald Isle. A year later, I read it in one of the ten volumes of the *Historiettes* of Tallemant des Reaux, who flourished in the middle of the seventeenth century. The next summer, I happened to choose for my light reading *Le Moyen de Parvenir*, attributed by most to Beroalde de Varville, although it may possibly be, in part at least, the work of Rabelais; and in this collection, put together in the sixteenth century, again I found my Irish story—Gascon, this time, I think; certainly no longer Hibernian. It is characteristic of the transmigration of tales, that the story which we find first in the *Moyen de Parvenir*, avowedly a work of fiction, reappears a hundred years later in the Memoirs of Tallemant as a fact. It is a wise anecdote that knows its own father.

To another French collection, the *Contes du Sieur Galliard*, by Tabourot des Accords, Mr. Richard Grant White has traced one of the most amusing stanzas of "Yankee Doodle"—

> Yankee Doodle came to town
> And wore his striped trowsis;
> Said he couldn't see the town,
> There were so many houses.

The French ancestor is: "*Chascun me disoit que je verrois une si grande et belle ville; mais on se mocquoit de moi; car on ne le peut voir à cause de la multitude des maisons qui empêchent la veüe.*" And I think there is an even older English saying to the effect that one could not see the forest for the trees.

There is no need here to enter on the vexed question of plagiarism, though it is very tempting at all times. One chapter of the *History of Plagiarism*—another of the interesting books waiting to be written—must contain many facts of interest tending to show the survival of humour. Almost the oldest literary monument in the history of the French comedy is the *Farce de Maître Pierre Pathelin;* it is as primitive and as positive in its humour as a play can be. An adaptation of

it under the name of *L'Avocat Pathelin* was made by Brueys and Palaprat, in accordance with the canons of French dramatic art which obtained in the eighteenth century. From *L'Avocat Pathelin* was taken an English Farce, the *Village Lawyer,* brought out at Drury Lane under the management of David Garrick. The *Village Lawyer* kept the stage for nearly a century, and the last time it was acted in New York Mr. Joseph Jefferson took the chief part. A perversion of the *Village Lawyer,* under the title of the *Great Sheep Case,* has been made for the use of the ruder and more boisterous actors who perform in the entertainments known, for some inscrutable reason, as Variety Shows. Thus it happens that one of the earliest comic plays of France still keeps the stage in America—as strong an instance of the tenacity of humour as one could wish.

When a story is authenticated by a proper name we are inclined to treat it with more respect than when it is a mere bastard with no right to a patronymic. There has recently been put into circulation in America an anecdote sharpened to the same point as an anecdote recorded in the histrionic biographies of the last century; but the proper names which appear in both versions lead one to believe that there has been no wilful infringement of copyright. Foote was forever girding at Garrick's parsimony—very unjustly, for Garrick was careful of the pence only that he might have pounds to lend and to give. Garrick dropped a guinea once and sought in vain, until he gave up the search, saying petulantly, "I believe it has gone to the devil!" Whereupon Foote remarked that Davy could make a guinea go farther than anyone else. This is the tale as told in the last century in the Old World. Here is the tale as told in the New World in this century. When Mr. William M. Evarts was Secretary of State he went with a party to see the Natural Bridge in Virginia, not very far from the capital. Somebody repeated the tradition that George Washington once threw a silver dollar over the bridge—a very remarkable feat of strength and skill. "In those days," was the comment of Mr. Evarts, "in those days a dollar went so much farther than it does now!" Although the point is the same on which the two tales turn, they impress one as of quite independent invention; we may doubt whether Mr. Evarts, who has a merry wit of his own, ever heard of Foote's gibe.

When, however, the story is not vouched for by a proper name, the probability is that the successive reappearances of an anecdote are due to a survival in oral tradition. There is in America a familiar tale, summed up in the phrase "Let the other man walk!" It relates that a traveller in a hotel was kept awake long past midnight by a steady tramp, tramp, on the floor over him. At last he went upstairs and asked what the matter might be. The occupant of the upper room said that he owed money to another man for which he had given a note, and the note came due on the morrow and he could not meet it.

"Are you certain that you cannot pay your debt?" asked the visitor. "Alas, I cannot," replied the debtor. "Then," said the visitor, "if it cannot be helped, lie down and go to sleep—and let the other man walk!" Now this is a mere Americanization of a story of Poggio's of an inhabitant of Perugia, who walked in melancholy because he could not pay his debts. *"Vah, stulte,"* was the advice given him, "leave anxiety to your creditors!"

Another well-worn American anecdote describes the result of owning both a parrot and a monkey. When the owner of the bird and the beast comes home one day, he finds the monkey decked with red and green feathers, but he does not find the parrot for a long while. At last, the bird appears from an obscure corner plucked bare save a single tail-feather; he hops upon his perch with such dignity as he can muster and says, with infinite pathos, "Oh, we have had a hell of a time!" At first nothing could seem more American than this, but there is a story essentially the same in Walpole's *Letters*. Yet another parrot story popular in New York, where a well-known wit happens to be a notorious stutterer, is as little American as this of Walpole's. The stutterer is supposed to ask the man who offers the parrot for sale if it c-c-c-can t-t-t-talk. "If it could not talk better than you I'd wring its neck," is the vendor's indignant answer. I found this only the other day in Buckland's *Curiosities of Natural History*, first published nearly a quarter of a century ago; and since this paper was first published a contributor to the *Dramatic Review* has traced it back to Henry Philip's *Recollections*.

The two phrases, "let the other man walk" and "we have had a hell of a time," have passed into proverbs in America. The anecdotes in which they are enshrined happened to tickle the fancy of the American people most prodigiously. There is in them, as they are now told in the United States, a certain dryness and directness and subtlety and extravagance—four qualities characteristic of much of the American humour which is one of the most abundant of our exports. In nothing is the note of nationality more distinct than in jokes. The delicate indelicacies of M. Grévin are hardly more un-English than the extravagant vagaries of the wild humorists of the boundless prairies of the West. In Hebrew I am informed and believe the pun is a legitimate figure of lofty rhetoric, and in England I have observed it is the staple of comic effort; in America most of us are intolerant of the machine-made pun. To be acceptable to the American mind the pun must have an element of unexpected depravity—like Dr. Holmes's immortal play on a word when he explains to us that an onion is like an organ because it smells odious. As a rule, however, the native American humorist eschews all mere juggling with double meanings. He strives to attain an imaginative extravagance, recalling rather Rabelais than the more decorous contributors to the collection of *Mr. Punch*. Artemus Ward

suggests quietly that it would have been money in Jeff. Davis's pocket if he had never been born. Mark Twain in an answer to a correspondent recommends fish as a brain food, and after considering the contributions offered by the correspondent, indicates as his proper diet two whales—not necessarily large whales, just ordinary ones. But one of the best characters Mark Twain ever sketched from life, Colonel Mulberry Sellers, is almost exactly like a character in Ben Jonson's *The Devil is an Ass*. And Charles Lamb and Sydney Smith would have felt a thrill of delight at meeting the man who wanted to run up to Rome from Civita Vecchia that he might have "twenty minutes in the Eternal City." Indeed, if Mark Twain had only been a parson, he might have written singularly like unto the merry curate who once lived five miles from a lemon. Perhaps the strict theological training would have checked that tendency to apparent irreverence which leads Americans to speak disrespectfully of the equator. I think this irreverence is more apparent than actual. Americans are brought up on the Bible, and they use the familiar phrases of the Authorized Version without intent of irreverence. I have seen an Englishman shocked at passages in the *Biglow Papers* which an American accepted without hesitation or thought of evil.

Perhaps the most marked of the four chief characteristics of contemporary American humour—dryness, directness, subtlety, and extravagance—is a compound of the two latter into something very closely resembling imagination. An American reviewer of Mr. John Ashton's *Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century*—a most useful work, by the way, to whosoever shall undertake hereafter the editing of the *Authentic Jest-Book*—drew attention to the unlikeness of the mere telling of an incident—possibly comic enough in its happening, but vapid and mirthless beyond measure when it is set down in cold print—the unlikeness of this sort of comic tale to the more imaginative anecdotes now in favour in American newspapers. The reviewer copied from Mr. Ashton's book a comic tale taken from the *Sackful of Newes*, published in 1673, and set over against it a little bit of the paragraphic humour which floats hither and thither on the shifting waves of American journalism. Here is the merry jest of two centuries ago:

"A certain butcher was flaying a calf at night, and had stuck a lighted candle upon his head, because he would be the quicker about his business, and when he had done he thought to take the same candle to light him to bed; but he had forgot where he had set it, and sought about the house for it, and all the while it stuck in his cap upon his head and lighted him in seeking it. At the last one of his fellows came and asked him what he sought for. 'Marry (quoth he), I look for the candle which I did flay the calf withal.' 'Why, thou fool,' qd. he, 'thou hast a candle in thy cap.' And then he felt towards his cap, and took

away the candle burning, whereas there was great laughing and he mocked for his labour, as he was well worthy."

And here is the journalistic joke of our own day:

"A coloured individual who went down on the slippery flags at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Congress Street, scrambled up and backed out into the street, and took a long look towards the roof of the nearest building.

'You fell from that third-story window!' remarked a pedestrian who had witnessed the tumble.

'Boss, I believes yer!' was the prompt reply; 'but what puzzles me am de queshun of how I got up dar, an' why I was leanin' outer de winder!'"

Of course neither of these tales would find a place in the *Authentic Jest-Book,* for the first is a flat telling of a flat fact and the second is an obvious invention of the enemy. But they are valuable as indications of the steady and increasing evolution of humour. Even if the merry jest about the butcher and his candle had been ennobled by a great name, it would have gone to the wall as one of the weakest jokes known to the student of the history of humour. The doctrine of the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence is as applicable to jests as it is to other entities. A given joke develops best in a given environment—a pun, for example, has more chance of life in England, a bit of imaginative extravagance in America, and a gibe at matrimonial infelicity or infidelity in France. It would be a great step gained if we could get at the primordial germs of wit or discover the protoplasm of humour.

Certain jests, like certain myths, exist in variants in all parts of the world. Comparative mythologists are diligently collecting the scattered folklore of all races; why should they not also be gathering together the primitive folk-humour? Cannot some comparative philologist reconstruct for us the original jest-book of the Aryan people? It would be very interesting to know the exact stock of jokes our forefathers took with them in their migrations from the mighty East. It would be most instructive to be informed just how far they had got in the theory and practice of humour. It would be a pure joy to discover precisely what might be the original fund of root-jests laughed at by Teuton and Latin and Hindoo before these races were differentiated one from another by time and travel and climate. I wonder whether the pastoral Aryan knew and loved an early form of Lamb's favourite comic tale, the one in which a mad wag asks the rustic whether that is his own hare or a wig? And what did the dark-haired Iberian laugh at before the tall blonde Aryan drove him into the corners of Europe? It was probably some practical joke or other, in which a bone knife or a flint arrow-head played the chief part. The records of the Semitic

race are familiar to us, but we know nothing or next to nothing about the primitive humour of the alleged Turanians.

When this good work is well in hand, and when the collector of comic orts and ends is prepared to make his report, there might be held an International Exhibition of Jokes, which would be quite as useful and quite as moral as some of the International Exhibitions we have had of late years. I think I should spend most of my time in the Retrospective Section studying the antique jests. "Old as a circus joke" might be a proverb, and the Christmas pantomime and the Christy Minstrel can supply jokes both practical and otherwise, quite as fatigued and as hoary with age as those of the circus. Among its many advantages this International Exhibition of Jokes would have one of great importance—it would forever dispel the belief in the saying of one of old that there were only thirty-eight good stories in existence, and that thirty-seven of these could not be told before ladies. There might have been some foundation for this saying in the days when the ladies had to leave the table after dinner because the conversation of the gentlemen then became unfit for their ears. While a good joke should be like a pin, in that it should come to a head soon and be able to stand on its point, yet only too many sorry jests are rather to be defined as unlike a mathematical line, in that they have breadth as well as length.

It is perhaps owing to the existence of stories of this sort that woman has lost the faculty of story-telling. Of course, I do not mean that the fair sex are not felicitous at fiction; the Scheherazades of the serials would confute me at once. I mean that women do not amuse each other by the exchange of ancedote as men are wont to do. They do not retail the latest good thing. They chat, gossip, giggle, converse, talk, and amuse themselves easily together, but they do not swop stories in man-fashion. Where man is objective, woman is subjective. She is satisfied with her own wit, without need of colporting the humour of a stranger. Woman's wit has sex. It is wholly different from man's wit. From Beatrice (though she was said to take hers from the *C. Merry Tales*) to Mrs. Poyser (who gave us that marvellous definition of a conceited man as one who was like the cock that thought the sun rose to hear him crow); the bright women of fiction have been witty rather than humorous. It may be that the distinction between wit and humour is one of sex after all. I have a friend—he is an editor—who declares that the difference between wit and humour, and again between talent and genius, is only the difference between the raspberry and the strawberry. Doubtless God might have made a better berry than the strawberry, and doubtless God might have given man a better gift than humour—but he never did. Woman has not the full gift; she has wit and some humour, it is true, but she has only a slighter sense of humour, whence comes much marital unhappiness.

As George Eliot tells us, "a difference of taste in jests is a great strain of the affections."

It is said that the rustic, both the male and the female of that peculiar species, has a positive hostility to a new joke. I do not believe this. Of a certainty it is not true of the American of New England, who is as humorous in his speech as he is shrewd in his business dealings, and the more humour he has the less sharp he is in trade and the less severe in his views as to the necessity of work. We may cite in proof of this Mrs. Stowe's delightful portrait of that village ne'er-do-well, Sam Lawson. And I doubt if it is true of the English rustic as he really is, for we know it is not true of him as he appears in the pages of George Eliot and of Mr. Thomas Hardy. There he has a mother-wit of his own, and although fond of the old joke, the meaning of which has been fully fathomed, he is not intolerant of a new quip or a fresh gibe. What he cannot abide is a variation in the accepted form of an accepted anecdote. This he will none of—as a child resolutely rejects the slightest deviation from the canonical version of the fairy-tale with which she is fondly familiar. The rustic and the child are loyal to old friends, whether it be "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods," or "Brer Rabbit and the Tar-Baby," or "Old Grouse in the Gunroom," at which honest Diggory had laughed these twenty years, and which now, alas! is utterly lost to the knowledge of man, even Goldsmith's latest and most learned biographer confessing perforce that he has been wholly unable to recover it from out the darkness of the past.

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HENRY VAN DYKE

Born in Pennsylvania in 1852, Henry Van Dyke studied at Princeton and Berlin, after which he became a Presbyterian minister. In 1900 he was appointed Professor of English Literature at Princeton University and from 1913 to 1917 he was United States minister to the Netherlands. He has written essays, stories, and poems which are to be found in the *Collected Works* published in 1920. Later books are *Camp-Fires and Guide-Posts* and *Songs Out of Doors*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Camp-Fires and Guide-Posts* by permission of Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

THE PATHLESS PROFESSION

IT IS a curious fact that there is no good guide-book to authorship. There are a few self-portraits, more or less convincing, of authors at work. There are many essays, more or less illuminating, upon the craft of writing in general, and upon the habits and procedure of cer-

tain great writers in particular. The best of these confessions and criticisms are excellent reading, full of entertainment and instruction for the alert and candid mind in every age and calling, and touched with a special, sympathetic interest for those young persons who have sternly resolved, or fondly dreamed, that they will follow a literary career. A volume of carefully selected material of this kind might be made attractive and rewarding to readers who are also intending authors. But the one thing for which such a book ought not to be taken, or mistaken, is a manual of the profession of literature.

The reasons for this appear to me quite as remarkable as the fact itself. The business of authors being to write, why should we not be able to gather from them such instruction in regard to writing, and the necessary preparation for it, as would make the pathway of authorship so plain that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein?

The answer to this question is an open secret, an instructive paradox.

There is no pathway of authorship.

It is a voyage, if you like; but there are no guide-posts in the sea. It is a flight, if you like; but there are no tracks in the air. It is certainly not a journey along a railway line, or a highroad, or even a well-marked trail.

In this it differs from other vocations like the Church, the Bar, the Army, the Navy, Engineering, Medicine, or Teaching. For each of these there is a pretty clearly defined path of preparatory study, with fixed gateways of examination along its course. When the last gate is passed and the young doctor is licensed to practise, the young clergyman ordained to preach, the young lawyer admitted to the bar, the path broadens into a road, which leads from one professional duty to another and brings him from task to task, if he is fortunate and industrious, with the regularity of a time-table, and, it must be added, with something of the monotony of a clock.

It is not so with the young intending author. There is no time of preparation prescribed, or even authoritatively advised, for him or for her. There are no fierce examiners standing like lions in the way. No hard-earned diploma, or certificate, or licence is demanded. There are no set duties to be performed at certain times, like a case to be argued at the first session of the court in November, or an appendix to be removed next Thursday afternoon, or two sermons to be preached every Sunday. Intending authors, and for that matter practising authors, are like Milton's Adam and Eve when the closed gate of Paradise was behind them:

The world was all before them where to choose.

It looks very free and easy and attractive, this vocation of making books. All that the young writer has to do is to provide himself, or herself, with paper and a pen (or a typewriter), retire into a convenient

room (almost any kind of a room will answer the purpose), and emerge with a book which a publisher will print, advertise, and sell, and which the public will read.

And after that? Why, after that it looks freer and easier still. All that the successful writer has to do is to repeat the process with a new book at any convenient season.

But this very freedom, so alluring at a distance, becomes bewildering and troublesome at close range. The young intending author who has a serious ambition and a mind in thinking order very soon recognizes, either by the light of pure reason or by the glimmer of sad experience, that there are difficulties in this simple business of writing books which publishers will desire to print and the public to read. Many manuscripts are offered but few are chosen. How does one learn to cope with these difficulties and overcome them? How does one make ready to produce a manuscript which shall be reasonably sure of a place among the chosen few? By going to college, or by travel? By living in solitude, or in society? By imitating select models, or by cultivating a strenuous originality? By reading Plato, or *The Literary Digest?*

Nobody seems to know the right answer to these questions. Guesses are made at them. Universities announce courses in daily theme-writing. Schools of correspondence offer to teach the secrets of literature. Bureaus of Authorship are advertised. But the results produced by these various institutions are not consistent enough to be regarded as inevitable. Travel does not guarantee an observing mind, nor solitude a profound one; nor does society always refine the intelligence. The strenuous effort to be original often ends in a very common type of folly. Conscious imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but it rarely produces the closest resemblance.

Meantime, a sufficient number of authors, great and small, continue to arrive, as they always have arrived, from their native regions, by their own ways. Ask them how they got there, and they cannot tell you, even when they try to do so. The reason is because they do not know. There was no pathway. They travelled as they could. Power and skill came to them, sometimes suddenly, sometimes slowly, always inexplicably.

Do you suppose it is possible to explain how Shakespeare became able to write *Hamlet,* or Milton to compose *Paradise Lost?* It is true that George Eliot describes "how she came to write fiction," and Stevenson gives an entertaining sketch of some of the methods in which he pursued his "own private end, which was to learn to write." But does George Eliot herself understand the secret of her preparation to create her vivid, revealing *Scenes from Clerical Life?* Or will the study of those favourite authors to whom Stevenson says he "played the sedulous ape," enable the young short-story-tellers really to reproduce his inimitable style?

In the middle of the nineteenth century several learned, industrious, and wise Americans were delivering lectures. Why did Emerson's crystallize into essays? Where did Hawthorne learn how to write *The Scarlet Letter,* in Bowdoin College or in the Salem Custom-house? Could Thackeray have told you how he found the way from *The Luck of Barry Lyndon* to *Vanity Fair,* or Dickens from *Sketches by Boz* to *Pickwick Papers*?

There is no other vocation of man into which "the unknown quantity" enters as largely as it does into authorship; and almost all writers who have won fame, even in a modest degree, if they are thoroughly candid, will confess to a not unpleasant experience of surprise at their own success.

Now all this implies an element of uncertainty in the author's profession—if, indeed, a vocation so pathless may be called a profession at all. In the regular and, so to speak, macadamized professions, those who follow the road with energy, fidelity, and fair intelligence may count upon a reasonable reward. But in the open field of literature it is impossible to foretell which one of a thousand aspirants will come to fame, or which ten will be able to earn a living.

It is for this reason, no doubt, that some instinct of prudence, or some pressure of necessity, has made many authors provide themselves with another bread-winner than the pen. When we consider how many well-known and even famous writers, from Chaucer to Conan Doyle, have had some avocation besides writing, we may justly conclude that there is hardly any human occupation, from diplomacy to doctoring, in which the intending author may not learn to write, and from which genius, and even talent, may not find a passage into literature. Charles Lamb's labour in the East India House did not dim the luminous wit of his essays. William de Morgan's long life as a manufacturer of tiles did not prevent him, at last, from making his novels "somehow good." The career of James Ford Rhodes as an ironmaster was no bar to his notable success as a historian. Indeed, it almost seems as if some useful occupation, or at least some favourite recreation or pursuit, to bring the writer into unprofessional contact with the realities of life and the personalities of other men, may be more of a help than a hindrance to vital authorship.

Writing, in itself, is not an especially interesting or picturesque employment. Romance can make little of it. Even when the hero of the novel is a literary person, like Arthur Pendennis or David Copperfield, the things that interest us most happen to him outside of the bookroom. It is what lies behind writing, and leads up to it, and flows into it, that really counts.

The biography of an author is almost interrupted when he takes his pen in hand.

Who would not ride with Scott on a summer raid through the High-

lands, or walk with him and his dogs beside the Tweed, rather than watch him at work in the little room where he wrote *Waverley* by candle-light?

I think it was Byron who said something like this: "The moment in which a poem is conceived is one of infinite pleasure, the hours in which it is brought forth are full of the pains of labour." Of course I do not mean to deny that the author's vocation has its own inward delight and its own exceeding great reward. The delight lies in the conception of something that craves utterance: and the reward lies in the production of something that goes out alive into the world. A true call to the vocation of literature is both inward and outward: a strong desire of self-expression, and a proved power of communicating thought and feeling through the written word.

The wish to write merely for the sake of being a writer, if I may so describe a vague ambition which vexes many young persons, is rather a small and futile thing, and seldom leads to happiness, usefulness, or greatness.

Literature has been made by men and women who became writers because they had something to say and took the necessary pains to learn how to say it.

But how did this happen to these men and women? What brought them to this happy pass where the inward call to self-expression was confirmed by the outward power to interest readers? Who can tell?

It looks simple. And no doubt there is a certain element of simplicity in the necessary processes of learning to spell, to construct sentences, to use words correctly, to develop plots, to recognize rhymes, and to observe metres. But there is a mystery in it, after all.

From Shakespeare's deepest tragedy to Kipling's most rattling ditty, from Wordsworth's loftiest ode to Dobson's lightest lyric, from Victor Hugo's biggest romance to De Maupassant's briefest tale, from Plato's profoundest dialogue to Chesterton's most paradoxical monologue, from George Eliot's *Romola* to Miss Alcott's *Little Women*, every bit of literature, great or small, has a measure of magic in it, and ultimately is no more explicable than life itself.

* * *

WOODROW WILSON

Thomas Woodrow Wilson was born in 1856. He studied at Princeton and Johns Hopkins and after some time spent in practising law and in lecturing he went back to Princeton, becoming president in 1910. In the following year he was elected governor of New Jersey, and in the years 1912 and 1916 was elected, as the Democratic candidate, President of the United States. He was thus at the helm during the difficult period before and after America's entry into the Great

War. He occupied a commanding position at the Peace Conference and was responsible for the inauguration of the League of Nations. The strain of these troubled times told on his health, and he died in 1924. His writings include *A History of the American People*, *George Washington*, *When a Man Comes to Himself*, and *On Being Human*.

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

I

IT IS difficult to describe any single part of a great governmental system without describing the whole of it. Governments are living things and operate as organic wholes. Moreover, governments have their natural evolution and are one thing in one age, another in another. The makers of the Constitution constructed the federal government upon a theory of checks and balances which was meant to limit the operation of each part and allow to no single part or organ of it a dominating force; but no government can be successfully conducted upon so mechanical a theory. Leadership and control must be lodged somewhere; the whole art of statesmanship is the art of bringing the several parts of government into effective co-operation for the accomplishment of particular common objects—and party objects at that. Our study of each part of our federal system, if we are to discover our real government as it lives, must be made to disclose to us its operative co-ordination as a whole: its places of leadership, its method of action, how it operates, what checks it, what gives it energy and effect. Governments are what politicians make them, and it is easier to write of the President than of the presidency.

The government of the United States was constructed upon the Whig theory of political dynamics, which was a sort of unconscious copy of the Newtonian theory of the universe. In our own day, whenever we discuss the structure of development of anything, whether in nature or in society, we consciously or unconsciously follow Mr. Darwin; but before Mr. Darwin, they followed Newton. Some single law, like the law of gravitation, swung each system of thought and gave it its principle of unity. Every sun, every planet, every free body in the space of the heavens, the world itself, is kept in its place and reined to its course by the attraction of bodies that swing with equal order and precision about it, themselves governed by the nice poise and balance of forces which give the whole system of the universe its symmetry and perfect adjustment. The Whigs had tried to give England a similar constitution. They had had no wish to destroy

the throne, no conscious desire to reduce the king to a mere figurehead, but had intended only to surround and offset him with a system of constitutional checks and balances which should regulate his otherwise arbitrary course and make it at least always calculable.

They had made no clear analysis of the matter in their own thoughts; it has not been the habit of English politicians, or indeed of English-speaking politicians on either side of the water, to be clear theorists. It was left to a Frenchman to point out to the Whigs what they had done. They had striven to make Parliament so influential in the making of laws and so authoritative in the criticism of the king's policy that the king could in no matter have his own way without their co-operation and assent, though they left him free, the while, if he chose, to interpose an absolute veto upon the acts of Parliament. They had striven to secure for the courts of law as great an independence as possible, so that they might be neither overawed by Parliament nor coerced by the king. In brief, as Montesquieu pointed out to them in his lucid way, they had sought to balance executive, legislature, and judiciary off against one another by a series of checks and counterpoises, which Newton might readily have recognized as suggestive of the mechanism of the heavens.

The makers of our federal Constitution followed the scheme as they found it expounded in Montesquieu, followed it with genuine scientific enthusiasm. The admirable expositions of the *Federalist* read like thoughtful applications of Montesquieu to the political needs and circumstances of America. They are full of the theory of checks and balances. The President is balanced off against Congress, Congress against the President, and each against the courts. Our statesmen of the earlier generations quoted no one so often as Montesquieu, and they quoted him always as a scientific standard in the field of politics. Politics is turned into mechanics under his touch. The theory of gravitation is supreme.

The trouble with the theory is that government is not a machine, but a living thing. It falls, not under the theory of the universe, but under the theory of organic life. It is accountable to Darwin, not to Newton. It is modified by its environment, necessitated by its tasks, shaped to its functions by the sheer pressure of life. No living thing can have its organs offset against each other as checks, and live. On the contrary, its life is dependent upon their quick co-operation, their ready response to the commands of instinct or intelligence, their amicable community of purpose. Government is not a body of blind forces; it is a body of men, with highly differentiated functions, no doubt, in our modern day of specialization, but with a common task and purpose. Their co-operation is indispensable, their warfare fatal. There can be no successful government without leadership or without the intimate, almost instinctive, co-ordination of the organs of life and action. This

is not theory, but fact, and displays its force as fact, whatever theories may be thrown across its track. Living political constitutions must be Darwinian in structure and in practice.

II

Fortunately, the definitions and prescriptions of our constitutional law, though conceived in the Newtonian spirit and upon the Newtonian principle, are sufficiently broad and elastic to allow for the play of life and circumstance. Though they were Whig theorists, the men who framed the federal Constitution were also practical statesmen with an experienced eye for affairs and a quick practical sagacity in respect of the actual structure of government, and they have given us a thoroughly workable model. If it had in fact been a machine governed by mechanically automatic balances, it would have had no history; but it was not, and its history has been rich with the influences and personalities of the men who have conducted it and made it a living reality. The government of the United States has had a vital and normal organic growth and has proved itself eminently adapted to express the changing temper and purposes of the American people from age to age.

That is the reason why it is easier to write of the President than of the presidency. The presidency has been one thing at one time, another at another, varying with the man who occupied the office and with the circumstances that surrounded him. One account must be given of the office during the period 1789 to 1825, when the government was getting its footing both at home and abroad, struggling for its place among the nations and its full credit among its own people; when English precedents and traditions were strongest; and when the men chosen for the office were men bred to leadership in a way that attracted to them the attention and confidence of the whole country. Another account must be given of it during Jackson's time, when an imperious man, bred not in deliberative assemblies or quiet councils, but in the field and upon a rough frontier, worked his own will upon affairs, with or without formal sanction of law, sustained by a clear undoubting conscience and the love of a people who had grown deeply impatient of the *régime* he had supplanted. Still another account must be given of it during the years 1836 to 1861, when domestic affairs of many debatable kinds absorbed the country, when Congress necessarily exercised the chief choices of policy, and when the Presidents who followed one another in office lacked the personal force and initiative to make for themselves a leading place in counsel. After that came the Civil War and Mr. Lincoln's unique task and achievement, when the executive seemed for a little while to become by sheer stress of circumstances the whole government, Congress merely voting supplies and assenting to necssary laws, as Parliament did in the time of the Tudors. From

1865 to 1898 domestic questions, legislative matters in respect of which Congress had naturally to make the initial choice, legislative leaders the chief decisions of policy, came once more to the front, and no President except Mr. Cleveland played a leading and decisive part in the quiet drama of our national life. Even Mr. Cleveland may be said to have owed his great *rôle* in affairs rather to his own native force and the confused politics of the time, than to any opportunity of leadership naturally afforded him by a system which had subordinated so many Presidents before him to Congress. The war with Spain again changed the balance of parts. Foreign questions became leading questions again, as they had been in the first days of the government, and in them the President was of necessity leader. Our new place in the affairs of the world has since that year of transformation kept him at the front of our government, where our own thoughts and the attention of men everywhere is centred upon him.

Both men and circumstances have created these contrasts in the administration and influence of the office of President. We have all been disciples of Montesquieu, but we have also been practical politicians. Mr. Bagehot once remarked that it was no proof of the excellence of the Constitution of the United States that the Americans had operated it with conspicuous success because the Americans could run any constitution successfully; and, while the compliment is altogether acceptable, it is certainly true that our practical sense is more noticeable than our theoretical consistency, and that, while we were once all constitutional lawyers, we are in these latter days apt to be very impatient of literal and dogmatic interpretations of constitutional principle.

The makers of the Constitution seem to have thought of the President as what the stricter Whig theorists wished the king to be: only the legal executive, the presiding and guiding authority in the application of law and the execution of policy. His veto upon legislation was only his "check" on Congress—was a power of restraint, not of guidance. He was empowered to prevent bad laws, but he was not to be given an opportunity to make good ones. As a matter of fact he has become very much more. He has become the leader of his party and the guide of the nation in political purpose, and therefore in legal action. The constitutional structure of the government has hampered and limited his action in these significant *rôles,* but it has not prevented it. The influence of the President has varied with the men who have been Presidents and with the circumstances of their times, but the tendency has been unmistakably disclosed, and springs out of the very nature of government itself. It is merely the proof that our government is a living, organic thing, and must, like every other government, work out the close synthesis of active parts which can exist only when leadership is lodged in some one man or group of men. You cannot compound a successful government out of antagonisms. Greatly as the

practice and influence of Presidents has varied, there can be no mistaking the fact that we have grown more and more inclined from generation to generation to look to the President as the unifying force in our complex system, the leader both of his party and of the nation. To do so is not inconsistent with the actual provisions of the Constitution; it is only inconsistent with a very mechanical theory of its meaning and intention. The Constitution contains no theories. It is as practical a document as Magna Carta.

III

The *rôle* of party leader is forced upon the President by the method of his selection. The theory of the makers of the Constitution may have been that the presidential electors would exercise a real choice, but it is hard to understand how, as experienced politicians, they can have expected anything of the kind. They did not provide that the electors should meet as one body for consultation and make deliberate choice of a President and Vice-President, but that they should meet "in their respective states" and cast their ballots in separate groups, without the possibility of consulting and without the least likelihood of agreeing, unless some such means as have actually been used were employed to suggest and determine their choice beforehand. It was the practice at first to make party nominations for the presidency by congressional caucus. Since the Democratic upheaval of General Jackson's time nominating conventions have taken the place of congressional caucuses; and the choice of Presidents by party conventions has had some very interesting results.

We are apt to think of the choice of nominating conventions as somewhat haphazard. We know, or think that we know, how their action is sometimes determined, and the knowledge makes us very uneasy. We know that there is no debate in nominating conventions, no discussions of the merits of the respective candidates, at which the country can sit as audience and assess the wisdom of the final choice. If there is any talking to be done, aside from the formal addresses of the temporary and permanent chairmen and of those who present the platform and the names of the several aspirants for nomination, the assembly adjourns. The talking that is to decide the result must be done in private committee-rooms and behind the closed doors of the headquarters of the several state delegations to the convention. The intervals between sessions are filled with a very feverish activity. Messengers run from one headquarters to another until the small hours of the morning. Conference follows conference in a way that is likely to bring newspaper correspondents to the verge of despair, it being next to impossible to put the rumours together into any coherent story of what is going on. Only at the rooms of the national committee

of the party is there any clear knowledge of the situation as a whole; and the excitement of the members of the convention rises from session to session under the sheer pressure of uncertainty. The final majority is compounded no outsider and few members can tell how.

Many influences, too, play upon nominating conventions, which seem mere winds of feeling. They sit in great halls, with galleries into which crowd thousands of spectators from all parts of the country, but chiefly, of course, from the place at which the convention sits, and the feeling of the galleries is transmitted to the floor. The cheers of mere spectators echo the names of popular candidates, and every excitement on the floor is enhanced a hundredfold in the galleries. Sudden gusts of impulse are apt to change the whole feeling of the convention, and offset in a moment the most careful arrangements of managing politicians. It has come to be a commonly accepted opinion that if the Republican convention of 1860 had not met in Chicago, it would have nominated Mr. Seward and not Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Seward was the acknowledged leader of the new party; had been its most telling spokesman; had given its tenets definition and currency. Mr. Lincoln had not been brought within view of the country as a whole until the other day, when he had given Mr. Douglas so hard a fight to keep his seat in the Senate, and had but just now given currency among thoughtful men to the striking phrases of the searching speeches he had made in debate with his practised antagonist. But the convention met in Illinois, amidst throngs of Mr. Lincoln's ardent friends and advocates. His managers saw to it that the galleries were properly filled with men who would cheer every mention of his name until the hall was shaken. Every influence of the place worked for him and he was chosen.

Thoughtful critics of our political practices have not allowed the excellence of the choice to blind them to the danger of the method. They have known too many examples of what the galleries have done to supplement the efforts of managing politicians to feel safe in the presence of processes which seem rather those of intrigue and impulse than those of sober choice. They can cite instances, moreover, of sudden, unlooked-for excitements on the floor of such bodies which have swept them from the control of all sober influences and hastened them to choices which no truly deliberative assembly could ever have made. There is no training-school for Presidents, unless, as some governors have wished, it be looked for in the governorships of states; and nominating conventions have confined themselves in their selections to no class, have demanded of aspirants no particular experience or knowledge of affairs. They have nominated lawyers without political experience, soldiers, editors of newspapers, newspaper correspondents, whom they pleased, without regard to their lack of contact with affairs. It would seem as if their choices were almost matters of chance.

In reality there is much more method, much more definite purpose,

much more deliberate choice in the extraordinary process than there seems to be. The leading spirits of the national committee of each party could give an account of the matter which would put a very different face on it and make the methods of nominating conventions seem, for all the undoubted elements of chance there are in them, on the whole very manageable. Moreover, the party that expects to win may be counted on to make a much more conservative and thoughtful selection of a candidate than the party that merely hopes to win. The haphazard selections which seem to discredit the system are generally made by conventions of the party unaccustomed to success. Success brings sober calculation and a sense of responsibility.

And it must be remembered also that our political system is not so co-ordinated as to supply a training for presidential aspirants or even to make it absolutely necessary that they should have had extended experience in public affairs. Certainly the country has never thought of members of Congress as in any particular degree fitted for the presidency. Even the Vice-President is not afforded an opportunity to learn the duties of the office. The men best prepared, no doubt, are those who have been governors of states or members of cabinets. And yet even they are chosen for their respective offices generally by reason of a kind of fitness and availability which does not necessarily argue in them the size and power that would fit them for the greater office. In our earlier practice cabinet officers were regarded as in the natural line of succession to the presidency. Mr. Jefferson had been in General Washington's cabinet, Mr. Madison in Mr. Jefferson's, Mr. Monroe in Mr. Madison's; and generally it was the Secretary of State who was taken. But those were days when English precedent was strong upon us, when cabinets were expected to be made up of the political leaders of the party in power; and from their ranks subsequent candidates for the presidency were most likely to be selected. The practice, as we look back to it, seems eminently sensible, and we wonder why it should have been so soon departed from and apparently forgotten. We wonder, too, why eminent senators have not sometimes been chosen; why members of the House have so seldom commanded the attention of nominating conventions; why public life has never offered itself in any definite way as a preparation for the presidential office.

If the matter be looked at a little more closely, it will be seen that the office of President, as we have used and developed it, really does not demand actual experience in affairs so much as particular qualities of mind and character which we are at least as likely to find outside the ranks of our public men as within them. What is it that a nominating convention wants in the man it is to present to the country for its suffrages? A man who will be and who will seem to the country in some sort an embodiment of the character and purpose it wishes its government to have—a man who understands his own day and the

needs of the country, and who has the personality and the initiative to enforce his views both upon the people and upon Congress. It may seem an odd way to get such a man. It is even possible that nominating conventions and those who guide them do not realize entirely what it is that they do. But in simple fact the convention picks out a party leader from the body of the nation. Not that it expects its nominee to direct the interior government of the party and to supplant its already accredited and experienced spokesmen in Congress and in its state and national committees; but it does of necessity expect him to represent it before public opinion and to stand before the country as its representative man, as a true type of what the country may expect of the party itself in purpose and principle. It cannot but be led by him in the campaign; if he be elected, it cannot but acquiesce in his leadership of the government itself. What the country will demand of the candidate will be, not that he be an astute politician, skilled and practised in affairs, but that he be a man such as it can trust, in character, in intention, in knowledge of its needs, in perception of the best means by which those needs may be met, in capacity to prevail by reason of his own weight and integrity. Sometimes the country believes in a party, but more often it believes in a man; and conventions have often shown the instinct to perceive which it is that the country needs in a particular presidential year, a mere representative partisan, a military hero, or some one who will genuinely speak for the country itself, whatever be his training and antecedents. It is in this sense that the President has the *rôle* of party leader thrust upon him by the very method by which he is chosen.

IV

As legal executive, his constitutional aspect, the President cannot be thought of alone. He cannot execute laws. Their actual daily execution must be taken care of by the several executive departments and by the now innumerable body of federal officials throughout the country. In respect of the strictly executive duties of his office the President may be said to administer the presidency in conjunction with the members of his cabinet, like the chairman of a commission. He is even of necessity much less active in the actual carrying out of the law than are his colleagues and advisers. It is therefore becoming more and more true, as the business of the government becomes more and more complex and extended, that the President is becoming more and more a political and less and less an executive officer. His executive powers are in commission, while his political powers more and more centre and accumulate upon him and are in their very nature personal and inalienable.

Only the larger sort of executive questions are brought to him. Departments which run with easy routine and whose transactions bring

few questions of general policy to the surface may proceed with their business for months and even years together without demanding his attention; and no department is in any sense under his direct charge. Cabinet meetings do not discuss detail: they are concerned only with the larger matters of policy or expediency which important business is constantly disclosing. There are no more hours in the President's day than in another man's. If he is indeed the executive, he must act almost entirely by delegation, and is in the hands of his colleagues. He is likely to be praised if things go well, and blamed if they go wrong; but his only real control is of the persons to whom he deputes the performance of executive duties. It is through no fault or neglect of his that the duties apparently assigned to him by the Constitution have come to be his less conspicuous, less important duties, and that duties apparently not assigned to him at all chiefly occupy his time and energy. The one set of duties it has proved practically impossible for him to perform; the other it has proved impossible for him to escape.

He cannot escape being the leader of his party except by incapacity and lack of personal force, because he is at once the choice of the party and of the nation. He is the party nominee, and the only party nominee for whom the whole nation votes. Members of the House and Senate are representatives of localities, are voted for only by sections of voters. There is no national party choice except that of President. No one else represents the people as a whole, exercising a national choice; and inasmuch as his strictly executive duties are in fact subordinated, so far, at any rate, as all detail is concerned, the President represents not so much the party's governing efficiency as its controlling ideals and principles. He is not so much part of its organization as its vital link of connexion with the thinking nation. He can dominate his party by being spokesman for the real sentiment and purpose of the country, by giving direction to opinion, by giving the country at once the information and the statements of policy which will enable it to form its judgments alike of parties and of men.

For he is also the political leader of the nation, or has it in his choice to be. The nation as a whole has chosen him, and is conscious that it has no other political spokesman. His is the only national voice in affairs. Let him once win the admiration and confidence of the country, and no other single force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him. His position takes the imagination of the country. He is the representative of no constituency, but of the whole people. When he speaks in his true character, he speaks for no special interest. If he rightly interpret the national thought and boldly insist upon it, he is irresistible; and the country never feels the zest of action so much as when its President is of such insight and calibre. Its instinct is for unified action, and it craves a single leader. It is for this reason that it will often prefer to choose a man rather than a party.

A President whom it trusts cannot only lead it, but form it to his own views.

It is the extraordinary isolation imposed upon the President by our system that makes the character and opportunity of his office so extraordinary. In him are centred both opinion and party. He may stand, if he will, a little outside party and insist as if it were upon the general opinion. It is with the instinctive feeling that it is upon occasion such a man that the country wants that nominating conventions will often nominate men who are not their acknowledged leaders, but only such men as the country would like to see lead both its parties. The President may also, if he will, stand within the party counsels and use the advantage of his power and personal force to control its actual programmes. He may be both the leader of his party and the leader of the nation, or he may be one or the other. If he lead the nation his party can hardly resist him. His office is anything he has the sagacity and force to make it.

That is the reason why it has been one thing at one time, another at another. The Presidents who have not made themselves leaders have lived no more truly on that account in the spirit of the Constitution than those whose force has told in the determination of law and policy. No doubt Andrew Jackson overstepped the bounds meant to be set to the authority of his office. It was certainly in direct contravention of the spirit of the Constitution that he should have refused to respect and execute decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, and no serious student of our history can righteously condone what he did in such matters on the ground that his intentions were upright and his principles pure. But the Constitution of the United States is not a mere lawyers' document: it is a vehicle of life, and its spirit is always the spirit of the age. Its prescriptions are clear and we know what they are; a written document makes lawyers of us all, and our duty as citizens should make us conscientious lawyers, reading the text of the Constitution without subtlety or sophistication; but life is always your last and most authoritative critic.

Some of our Presidents have deliberately held themselves off from using the full power they might legitimately have used, because of conscientious scruples, because they were more theorists than statesmen. They have held the strict literary theory of the Constitution, the Whig theory, the Newtonian theory, and have acted as if they thought that Pennsylvania Avenue should have been even longer than it is; that there should be no intimate communication of any kind between the Capitol and the White House; that the President as a man was no more at liberty to lead the houses of Congress by persuasion than he was at liberty as President to dominate them by authority—supposing that he had, what he has not, authority enough to dominate them. But the makers of the Constitution were not enacting Whig theory,

they were not making laws with the expectation that, not the laws themselves, but their opinions, known by future historians to lie back of them, should govern the constitutional action of the country. They were statesmen, not pedants, and their laws are sufficient to keep us to the paths they set us upon. The President is at liberty, both in law and conscience, to be as big a man as he can. His capacity will set the limit; and if Congress be overborne by him, it will be no fault of the makers of the Constitution—it will be from no lack of constitutional powers on its part, but only because the President has the nation behind him, and Congress has not. He has no means of compelling Congress except through public opinion.

That I say he has no means of compelling Congress will show what I mean, and that my meaning has no touch of radicalism or iconoclasm in it. There are illegitimate means by which the President may influence the action of Congress. He may bargain with members, not only with regard to appointments, but also with regard to legislative measures. He may use his local patronage to assist members to get or retain their seats. He may interpose his powerful influence, in one covert way or another, in contests for places in the Senate. He may also overbear Congress by arbitrary acts which ignore the laws or virtually override them. He may even substitute his own orders for acts of Congress which he wants but cannot get. Such things are not only deeply immoral, they are destructive of the fundamental understandings of constitutional government and, therefore, of constitutional government itself. They are sure, moreover, in a country of free public opinion, to bring their own punishment, to destroy both the fame and the power of the man who dares to practise them. No honourable man includes such agencies in a sober exposition of the Constitution or allows himself to think of them when he speaks of the influences of "life" which govern each generation's use and interpretation of that great instrument, our sovereign guide and the object of our deepest reverence. Nothing in a system like ours can be constitutional which is immoral or which touches the good faith of those who have sworn to obey the fundamental law. The reprobation of all good men will always overwhelm such influences with shame and failure. But the personal force of the President is perfectly constitutional to any extent to which he chooses to exercise it, and it is by the clear logic of our constitutional practice that he has become alike the leader of his party and the leader of the nation.

V

The political powers of the President are not quite so obvious in their scope and character when we consider his relations with Congress as when we consider his relations to his party and to the nation.

They need, therefore, a somewhat more critical examination. Leadership in government naturally belongs to its executive officers, who are daily in contact with practical conditions and exigencies and whose reputations alike for good judgment and for fidelity are at stake much more than are those of the members of the legislative body at every turn of the law's application. The lawmaking part of the government ought certainly to be very hospitable to the suggestions of the planning and acting part of it. Those Presidents who have felt themselves bound to adhere to the strict literary theory of the Constitution have scrupulously refrained from attempting to determine either the subjects or the character of legislation, except so far as they were obliged to decide for themselves, after Congress had acted, whether they should acquiesce in it or not. And yet the Constitution explicitly authorizes the President to recommend to Congress "such measures as he shall deem necessary and expedient," and it is not necessary to the integrity of even the literary theory of the Constitution to insist that such recommendations should be merely perfunctory. Certainly General Washington did not so regard them, and he stood much nearer the Whig theory than we do. A President's messages to Congress have no more weight or authority than their intrinsic reasonableness and importance give them: but that is their only constitutional limitation. The Constitution certainly does not forbid the President to back them up, as General Washington did, with such personal force and influence as he may possess. Some of our Presidents have felt the need, which unquestionably exists in our system, for some spokesman of the nation as a whole, in matters of legislation no less than in other matters, and have tried to supply Congress with the leadership of suggestion, backed by argument and by iteration and by every legitimate appeal to public opinion. Cabinet officers are shut out from Congress; the President himself has, by custom, no access to its floor; many long-established barriers of precedent, though not of law, hinder him from exercising any direct influence upon its deliberations; and yet he is undoubtedly the only spokesman of the whole people. They have again and again, as often as they were afforded the opportunity, manifested their satisfaction when he has boldly accepted the *rôle* of leader, to which the peculiar origin and character of his authority entitle him. The Constitution bids him speak, and times of stress and change must more and more thrust upon him the attitude of originator of policies.

His is the vital place of action in the system, whether he accept it as such or not, and the office is the measure of the man—of his wisdom as well as of his force. His veto abundantly equips him to stay the hand of Congress when he will. It is seldom possible to pass a measure over his veto, and no President has hesitated to use the veto when his own judgment of the public good was seriously at issue with that of the houses. The veto has never been suffered to fall into even temporary

disuse with us. In England it has ceased to exist, with the change in the character of the executive. There has been no veto since Anne's day, because ever since the reign of Anne the laws of England have been originated either by ministers who spoke the king's own will or by ministers whom the king did not dare gainsay; and in our own time the ministers who formulate the laws are themselves the executive of the nation; a veto would be a negative upon their own power. If bills pass of which they disapprove, they resign and give place to the leaders of those who approve them. The framers of the Constitution made in our President a more powerful, because a more isolated, king than the one they were imitating; and because the Constitution gave them their veto in such explicit terms, our Presidents have not hesitated to use it, even when it put their mere individual judgment against that of large majorities in both houses of Congress. And yet in the exercise of the power to suggest legislation, quite as explicitly conferred upon them by the Constitution, some of our Presidents have seemed to have a timid fear that they might offend some law of taste which had become a constitutional principle.

In one sense their messages to Congress have no more authority than the letters of any other citizen would have. Congress can heed or ignore them as it pleases; and there have been periods of our history when presidential messages were utterly without practical significance, perfunctory documents which few persons except the editors of newspapers took the trouble to read. But if the President has personal force and cared to exercise it, there is this tremendous difference between his messages and the views of any other citizen, either outside Congress or in it: that the whole country reads them and feels that the writer speaks with an authority and a responsibility which the people themselves have given him.

The history of our cabinets affords a striking illustration of the progress of the idea that the President is not merely the legal head, but also the political leader of the nation. In the earlier days of the government it was customary for the President to fill his cabinet with the recognized leaders of his party. General Washington even tried the experiment which William of Orange tried at the very beginning of the era of cabinet government. He called to his aid the leaders of both political parties, associating Mr. Hamilton with Mr. Jefferson, on the theory that all views must be heard and considered in the conduct of the government. That was the day in which English precedent prevailed, and English cabinets were made up of the chief political characters of the day. But later years have witnessed a marked change in our practice, in this as in many other things. The old tradition was indeed slow in dying out. It persisted with considerable vitality at least until General Garfield's day, and may yet from time to time revive, for many functions of our cabinets justify it and make it desirable. But

our later Presidents have apparently ceased to regard the cabinet as a council of party leaders such as the party they represent would have chosen. They look upon it rather as a body of personal advisers whom the President chooses from the ranks of those whom he personally trusts and prefers to look to for advice. Our recent Presidents have not sought their associates among those whom the fortunes of party contest have brought into prominence and influence, but have called their personal friends and business colleagues to cabinet positions, and men who have given proof of their efficiency in private, not in public, life—bankers who had never had any place in the formal counsels of the party, eminent lawyers who had held aloof from politics, private secretaries who had shown an unusual sagacity and proficiency in handling public business; as if the President were himself alone the leader of his party, the members of his cabinet only his private advisers, at any rate advisers of his private choice. Mr. Cleveland may be said to have been the first President to make this conception of the cabinet prominent in his choices, and he did not do so until his second administration. Mr. Roosevelt has emphasized the idea.

Upon analysis it seems to mean this: the cabinet is an executive, not a political body. The President cannot himself be the actual executive; he must therefore find, to act in his stead, men of the best legal and business gifts, and depend upon them for the actual administration of the government in all its daily activities. If he seeks political advice of his executive colleagues, he seeks it because he relies upon their natural good sense and experienced judgment, upon their knowledge of the country and its business and social conditions, upon their sagacity as representative citizens of more than usual observation and discretion; not because they are supposed to have had any very intimate contact with politics or to have made a profession of public affairs. He has chosen, not representative politicians, but eminent representative citizens, selecting them rather for their special fitness for the great business posts to which he has assigned them than for their political experience, and looking to them for advice in the actual conduct of the government rather than in the shaping of political policy. They are, in his view, not necessarily political officers at all.

It may with a great deal of plausibility be argued that the Constitution looks upon the President himself in the same way. It does not seem to make him a prime minister or the leader of the nation's counsels. Some Presidents are, therefore, and some are not. It depends upon the man and his gifts. He may be like his cabinet, or he may be more than his cabinet. His office is a mere vantage-ground from which he may be sure that effective words of advice and timely efforts at reform will gain telling momentum. He has the ear of the nation as of course, and a great person may use such an advantage greatly. If he use the opportunity, he may take his cabinet into partnership or not,

as he pleases; and so its character may vary with his. Self-reliant men will regard their cabinets as executive councils; men less self-reliant or more prudent will regard them as also political councils, and will wish to call into them men who have earned the confidence of their party. The character of the cabinet may be made a nice index of the theory of the presidential office, as well as of the President's theory of party government; but the one view is, so far as I can see, as constitutional as the other.

VI

One of the greatest of the President's powers I have not yet spoken of at all: his control, which is very absolute, of the foreign relations of the nation. The initiative in foreign affairs, which the President possesses without any restriction whatever, is virtually the power to control them absolutely. The President cannot conclude a treaty with a foreign power without the consent of the Senate, but he may guide every step of diplomacy, and to guide diplomacy is to determine what treaties must be made, if the faith and prestige of the government are to be maintained. He need disclose no step of negotiation until it is complete, and when in any critical matter it is completed the government is virtually committed. Whatever its disinclination, the Senate may feel itself committed also.

I have not dwelt upon this power of the President, because it has been decisively influential in determining the character and influence of the office at only two periods in our history; at the very first, when the government was young and had so to use its incipient force as to win the respect of the nations into whose family it had thrust itself, and in our own day when the results of the Spanish War, the ownership of distant possessions, and many sharp struggles for foreign trade make it necessary that we should turn our best talents to the task of dealing firmly, wisely, and justly with political and commercial rivals. The President can never again be the mere domestic figure he has been throughout so large a part of our history. The nation has risen to the first rank in power and resources. The other nations of the world look askance upon her, half in envy, half in fear, and wonder with a deep anxiety what she will do with her vast strength. They receive the frank professions of men like Mr. John Hay, whom we wholly trusted, with a grain of salt, and doubt what we were sure of, their truthfulness and sincerity, suspecting a hidden design under every utterance they make. Our President must always, henceforth, be one of the great powers of the world, whether he act greatly and wisely or not, and the best statesmen we can produce will be needed to fill the office of Secretary of State. We have but begun to see the presidential office in this light; but it is the light which will more and more beat upon it, and

more and more determine its character and its effect upon the politics of the nation. We can never hide our President again as a mere domestic officer. We can never again see him the mere executive he was in the thirties and forties. He must stand always at the front of our affairs, and the office will be as big and as influential as the man who occupies it.

How is it possible to sum up the duties and influence of such an office in such a system in comprehensive terms which will cover all its changeful aspects? In the view of the makers of the Constitution the President was to be legal executive; perhaps the leader of the nation; certainly not the leader of the party, at any rate while in office. But by the operation of forces inherent in the very nature of government he has become all three, and by inevitable consequence the most heavily burdened officer in the world. No other man's day is so full as his, so full of the responsibilities which tax mind and conscience alike and demand an inexhaustible vitality. The mere task of making appointments to office, which the Constitution imposes upon the President, has come near to breaking some of our Presidents down, because it is a never-ending task in a civil service not yet put upon a professional footing, confused with short terms of office, always forming and dissolving. And in proportion as the President ventures to use his opportunity to lead opinion and act as spokesman of the people in affairs the people stand ready to overwhelm him by running to him with every question, great and small. They are as eager to have him settle a literary question as a political; hear him as acquiescently with regard to matters of expert knowledge as with regard to public affairs, and call upon him to quiet all troubles by his personal intervention. Men of ordinary physique and discretion cannot be Presidents and live, if the strain be not somehow relieved. We shall be obliged always to be picking our chief magistrates from among wise and prudent athletes—a small class.

The future development of the presidency, therefore, must certainly, one would confidently predict, run along such lines as the President's later relations with his cabinet suggest. General Washington, partly out of unaffected modesty, no doubt, but also out of the sure practical instinct which he possessed in so unusual a degree, set an example which few of his successors seem to have followed in any systematic manner. He made constant and intimate use of his colleagues in every matter that he handled, seeking their assistance and advice by letter when they were at a distance and he could not obtain it in person. It is well known to all close students of our history that his greater state papers, even those which seem in some peculiar and intimate sense his personal utterances, are full of the ideas and the very phrases of the men about him whom he most trusted. His rough drafts came back to him from Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Madison in great part re-phrased and re-writ-

ten, in many passages re-conceived and given a new colour. He thought and acted always by the light of counsel, with a will and definite choice of his own, but through the instrumentality of other minds as well as his own.

The duties and responsibilities laid upon the President by the Constitution can be changed only by constitutional amendment—a thing too difficult to attempt except upon some greater necessity than the relief of an overburdened office, even though that office be the greatest in the land; and it is to be doubted whether the deliberate opinion of the country would consent to make of the President a less powerful officer than he is. He can secure his own relief without shirking any real responsibility. Appointments, for example, he can, if he will, make more and more upon the advice and choice of his executive colleagues; every matter of detail not only, but also every minor matter of counsel or of general policy, he can more and more depend upon his chosen advisers to determine; he need reserve for himself only the larger matters of counsel and that general oversight of the business of the government and of the persons who conduct it which is not possible without intimate daily consultations, indeed, but which is possible without attempting the intolerable burden of direct control. This is, no doubt, the idea of their functions which most Presidents have entertained and which most Presidents suppose themselves to have acted on; but we have reason to believe that most of our Presidents have taken their duties too literally and have attempted the impossible. But we can safely predict that as the multitude of the President's duties increases, as it must with the growth and widening activities of the nation itself, the incumbents of the great office will more and more come to feel that they are administering it in its truest purpose and with greatest effect by regarding themselves as less and less executive officers and more and more directors of affairs and leaders of the nation—men of counsel and of the sort of action that makes for enlightenment.

* * *

EDWARD S. MARTIN

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The following essay is taken from *What's Ahead; and Meanwhile*, by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

THE BATS IN SOME BELFRIES

WHAT do people do who have no bats in their belfries? How do they get along at all with minds concerned with nothing more than the prosaic details of life—getting money and spending it, working at their jobs, looking for pleasures or consolations, keeping house, minding children, conducting "drives," giving dinner parties, and such things? Don't they get terribly bored with those exercises? When they need to retire into their thoughts have they any good thoughts to retire into? Have they any likely expectations a little remote from the ordinary to keep in mind, and give them an interest in newspapers and other means of information, to watch for signs that these expectations are making good or the contrary? Life-as-it-is is very cold victual, served up after life-as-it-was has gone by the board, and before life-as-it-is-to-be has taken form. Books merely about life as it is, which show no consciousness that it is a mere relic of a dead past and no curiosity about where it is driving to, must be food for minds which are very easily satisfied.

Now a good bat or two in one's belfry insures one from being bored to death with worn-out commonplaces. To have lively expectations about the next phase of life and curiosity about any information that purports to throw light on it, is an excellent bat. So everything which is concerned with the extraordinary new developments of the powers of man, whether natural and material or supernatural and elusive, helps to keep the faculties alert and observant. Reasonably good theories about the future of the human race and even about its remote past; exhumed information that throws light on how much human beings had come to know in prehistoric times; information about the derivation of races as we know them, and their probable destiny—all these things are helpful to spirits worn with waiting on the machinations of politicians and the sluggishness of popular majorities. Spiritism is an excellent bat. The theory that the ten lost tribes of Israel are the progenitors to an uncertain extent of races now active in world affairs is a better bat than any normal person who has not examined it could imagine. Everybody who wants to stay really alive had better accept it as true that man is a wonderful creature whose evolution is imperfectly traced, whose limitations are exaggerated, whose powers are almost limitless, about whom what is known is a mere beginning of what is knowable, and that knowledge is still in its infancy, though accumulating at a tremendous rate and reaching out towards marvels which will make our contemporary wonders seem commonplace.

Speculations about the ten lost tribes of Israel and what became of them are not new. One recalls a book published forty years or more

ago which argued that the Nestorians, East Syrians of Turkey and Persia, were descended from them. For the last sixty years the lost-articles department of history has been increasingly invaded by inquirers for those tribes. A whole literature about them has grown up, and it is by no means bad reading, and affords information about many curious things, even if it fails of conviction. If the lost tribes perished, then a great deal of space in the Bible has been wasted on their beginning and early history as a part of the Kingdom of Israel. If Jacob's prophetic estimate of his children's qualities is to go for naught, why has it been offered and continued to be offered to millions on millions of Bible readers? Few things in the Old Testament are read as much and have excited as much reflection as those forecasts. It is told in the Bible how the Israelites misbehaved, neglected orders, flirted with idolaters, and "cut up" under the influence of bad associates and weak kings, and how the Kingdom of Israel split and the ten tribes drifted away from the rest, while the tribes of Judah and Benjamin kept on for a while longer as an organized kingdom. At that time the lost tribes pretty well disappeared from the record of history, but that they continued to exist and to cut a figure in the world was confidently believed for many centuries, so that two epistles in the New Testament are addressed to the dispersed part of Israel.

The story of the imaginative people who want to connect the lost tribes with the history of Europe and especially the British Isles, and through them with the American people, begins with an alleged migration of the Prophet Jeremiah to Ireland in the year B. C. 721. They say he took with him two royal princesses who were his granddaughters; that he settled at Tara, which became a centre of civilization and presently the seat of a university. Presumably the harp that hung in Tara's halls is the familiar harp on the Irish flag. That was not all by a good deal. Other tribes are traced by these ingenious inquirers to England, partly out of Bible statements and prophecies, partly by existing monuments, partly by allusions in the writings of profane historians. The names of nations and tribes, sustaining various changes, are used to trace the movement of the tribes that bore them. So the Saxons are said originally to have been Isaac's sons and "British" is alleged to be a word made up from "Brith," covenant, and "ish," man, and means man of the Covenant. There is a story that when the Prophet Jeremiah came to Ireland he brought with him the stone which is now the seat of the coronation chair of England, which is kept in Westminster Abbey and in which every English monarch sits when he is crowned. There is such a chair. There is such a stone, and it is probably known that it came from Ireland. Whether the Prophet Jeremiah brought it there, and whether it is the stone that Jacob's head rested on when he had his dream and when he wrestled with the Angel, are matters proper for

discussion and are amply discussed in the various books which relate to the Anglo-Israel suggestion.

The Anglo-Israel people are pretty liberal about the disposition of the world. They do not insist that it is all going to the Chosen People, but they are quite strong for the opinion that the tribes of Israel have been nursed along for offices of special usefulness to mankind. They include the Normans and doubtless the Bretons among the peoples who have had an infusion of the prophetic stock. They include the Celts generally, especially the Welsh. One gathers something out of their books about the early intercourse between the countries east of the Mediterranean and the British Isles which is news to most casual readers of history. The upshot of all these curious investigations is that it belongs to the British, the Americans, and the Jews to hang together and work together as descendants of Israel, however mixed with other elements, and that they have in common distinctive purposes which differentiate them from the Latin Nations, and the other peoples of Europe.

Anybody that really wants to qualify as a son of Israel ought to be able to do it. The terms are liberal; the stock is extensively diffused and mixed with other stocks, but watered stock will do. The main inheritance is spiritual, and that may come by assimilation, so the Gentiles may get it.

The suggestion is useful to take some of the curse off of the researches and expositions of Lothrop Stoddard, Charles W. Gould, and Madison Grant, who insist with so much fervour that we must be Nordics or perish. Maybe the Lost Tribes are the real Nordics, or found them sympathetic and grafted on to them. Perhaps some of the tribes of Israel merged into the Teutonic race, which Houston Chamberlain insisted was the world's white hope. To be sure, the Nordics were blonds, and one would expect the Lost Tribes to be dark, but climate might account for that, and there are light-haired, and even red-haired, Jews.

A great merit of the Anglo-Israel hypothesis is that it takes the Jews in out of the cold, and provides them with blood relatives in a good position in life. If the British are descendants of Jacob, even in a diluted degree, the Jews can't complain because Jerusalem is in British hands. It is still in the family.

The two great questions that are interesting to us human creatures are: where did we come from and where are we going to? Both of them seem in these times to be in rapid process of elucidation. A lot is turning up all the time about the world that was, and a lot more about the world that is to come. Between the excavations in Egypt, Chaldea, Crete, Yucatan, and other places which reek with antiquity, and the adventures of the spiritists which constantly increase in interest and credibility, we seem to be in good way to get information about human

life, to live it more successfully than it has been lived heretofore. Knowledge is not worth anything, or at least cannot achieve very much, until the human mind is ready to receive it. Knowledge that comes before it can be generally understood is very apt to perish, or at least to lie idle and helpless until general information, or what we call science, begins to catch up with it. There is that old diary of Friar Bacon which seems to have wonderful things in it, but in his day it was not safe to disclose them, let alone try to make them work. All the way down recorded history, which is a mighty short path considering how old the world is, one finds heads bobbing up that had something in them quite out of the ordinary. The habit was to cut them off if they were troublesome and threatened to interfere too much with the existing order. That is not done now. The custodians of knowledge are very jealous, but they do not kill and burn as much as they did, and science really begins to have some imagination. What has been ascertained is so extraordinary that it helps the case of folks who claim that they have greater wonders still to show. The inferior scientists hold on to the idea that what they don't know is not knowledge, but the top scientists know better. They know that they have only scratched the surface of human life and the purpose of whoever ordained it.

These are anxious times in this world. They worry a great many people, and there is abundant reason for all of their anxieties. The great problems left by the War are working out, of course, but they seem to lag about it. Of Europe, as a whole, there is no existing management that can handle its problems. In so far as they work out, they work out by the action of underlying forces. The great powers try to take care of their own. The League of Nations is able to do something sometimes, but in the main, the great disease of Europe is progressing under the observation of doctors who have no remedies powerful enough to control it.

With Europe in that state, is it surprising that so many people are on the look-out for new developments in man, new knowledge to guide him, new powers to fetch him out of the predicament that he is in? Those are the people who have bats in their belfries. They want to know. They want to understand. They want to see the path cleared to something. They search the Scriptures to an extraordinary extent, compare with what they find there any outside spiritual information which they can pick up, and keep their eyes and ears open to new suggestions. They think that what the world most needs is a better and fuller understanding of human life, and they are far readier than they were five or six years ago to examine anything that promises to be helpful to that understanding. A great many people believe in immortality, believe that the dead go on living and wonder that they have not more to say to us—wonder that out of their enlarged experience they do not make to us more suggestions about the conduct of

life. More people all the time entertain the belief that they do make such suggestions, are making them now, and are trying systematically to perfect communication with the living.

If the common knowledge of mankind is up to the job of straightening out the complications of this present world, well and good; let the possessors of that knowledge do it. The field is open to them and no one is hindering their efforts. But if the job is too much for them, the possessors of uncommon knowledge may very properly bring to notice whatever they know or think they know that has a bearing on the general situation.

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SAMUEL McCHORD CROTHERS

Samuel McChord Crothers (1857-1927) was born in Illinois and studied at Princeton and Harvard Divinity School. He was first a Presbyterian minister and then became a Unitarian, holding various pastorates. Among his writings are books for children, like *Miss Muffet's Christmas Party*; critical works, like *Oliver Wendell Holmes*; religious essays, like *The Understanding Heart*; and miscellaneous essays, like *The Gentle Reader*.

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UNSEASONABLE VIRTUES

THERE are certain philosophers who have fallen into the habit of speaking slightingly of Time and Space. Time, they say, is only a poor concept of ours corresponding to no ultimate reality, and Space is little better. They are merely mental receptacles into which we put our sensations. We are assured that could we get at the right point of view we should see that real existence is timeless. Of course we cannot get at the right point of view, but that does not matter.

It is easy to understand how philosophers can talk in that way, for familiarity with great subjects breeds contempt; but we of the laity cannot dismiss either Time or Space so cavalierly. Having once acquired the time-habit, it is difficult to see how we could live without it. We are accustomed to use the minutes and hours as stepping-stones, and we pick our way from one to another. If it were not for them, we should find ourselves at once beyond our depth. It is the succession of events which makes them interesting. There is a delightful transitoriness about everything, and yet the sense that there is more where it all comes from. To the unsophisticated mind Eternity is not the negation

of Time; it is having all the time one wants. And why may not the unsophisticated mind be as nearly right in such matters as any other?

In a timeless existence there would be no distinction between now and then, before and after. Yesterdays and to-days would be merged in one featureless Forever. When we met one another it would be impertinent to ask, "How do you do?" The chilling answer would be: "I do not do; I am." There would be nothing more to say to one who had reduced his being to such bare metaphysical first principles.

I much prefer living in Time, where there are circumstances and incidents to give variety to existence. There is a dramatic instinct in all of us that must be satisfied. We watch with keen interest for what is coming next. We would rather have long waits than to have no shifting of the scenes, and all the actors on the stage at once, doing nothing.

An open-minded editor prints the following question from an anxious reader in regard to a serial story appearing in his paper: "Does it make any difference in reading the serial whether I begin with Saturday's chapter and read backward toward Monday, or should the tale be read as the chapters appear?"

The editor assures his subscriber that the story is of such uniform excellence that it would read well in either direction. In practical affairs our dramatic instinct will not allow us this latitude. We insist upon certain sequences. There is an expectancy that one thing will lead up to another. We do not take kindly to an anti-climax or to an anachronism. The Hebrew sage declares, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." That is in the right time, but alas for the beautiful thing that falls upon the wrong time! It is bewitched beyond all recognition by the old necromancer who has power to make "ancient good uncouth."

It is just here that charity requires that we should discriminate. There is a situation that demands the services of a kind-hearted indulgencer. Ethics has to do with two kinds of offences: one is against the eternal and unchanging standards of right and wrong, and the other against the perpetually varying conditions of the passing day. We are continually confusing the two. We visit upon the ancient uncouth good which comes honestly stumbling on its belated journey toward the perfect, all the condemnation that properly belongs to wilful evil. It is lucky if it gets off so easily as that, for we are likely to add the pains and penalties which belong to hypocritical pretence. As for a premature kind of goodness coming before there is time properly to classify it, that must expect martyrdom. Something of the old feeling about strangers still survives in us. We think it safer to treat the stranger as an enemy. If he survives our attacks we may make friends with him.

Those good people who, in their devotion to their own ideals, have

ignored all considerations of timeliness, have usually passed through sore tribulations. They have been the victims of cruel misunderstandings. Such, for example, was Saint Cerbonius. Cerbonius is one of the October saints. October is a good month for saints. The ecclesiastical calendar gives us a sense of spiritual mellowness and fruitfulness. The virtues celebrated are without the acidity which belongs to some other seasons: witness Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Teresa, Saint Luke, the beloved physician, Saint John Capistran, of whom it is written, "he had a singular talent for reconciling inveterate enemies and inducing them to love one another." Cerbonius has a modest place in this autumnal brotherhood; indeed, in some *Lives of the Saints,* he is not even mentioned, and yet he had the true October spirit. Nevertheless, his good was evil spoken of, and he came near to excommunication, and all because of his divergence from popular custom in the matter of time.

It seems that he lived toward the end of the sixth century, and that he was Bishop of Piombino. Very soon a great scandal arose, for it was declared that the bishop was neglecting his duties. At the accustomed hour the citizens came to the cathedral for their devotions, only to find the chancel devoid of clergy. Cerbonius and his priests were at that moment comfortably seated at breakfast. Each succeeding morning witnessed the same scene. The bishop was evidently an infidel scoffing at the rites of religion. Appeal was made to Rome, and legates were appointed who confirmed the astounding rumours. At last Cerbonius went to Rome to plead his cause; but only by a special miracle was his character cleared. The miracle induced the authorities to look into the matter more carefully, and it was found that Cerbonius, instead of neglecting his duties, had been carried away by holy zeal. While the people of Piombino were still in their beds, Cerbonius and his clergy would be celebrating mass. As for breakfast, that was quite late in the day.

It is easy to be wise after the event, and now that the matter has been cleared up it is evident that all the religion was not on one side. Taking a large view of the subject, we see that in the course of the twenty-four hours the bishop spent as much time in the church as the most scrupulous parishioner could ask. But it was just this large view that they were unwilling to take. With them it was now or never. They judged his character by the cross-section which they took at one particular hour.

I suppose that, had I lived in Piombino, I should have been a moderate anti-Cerbonian. Cerbonius was in error, but not in mortal sin. He was guilty of a heresy that disturbed the peace of the church—that of early rising. So long as early rising is held only as a creed for substance of doctrine and set forth as a counsel of perfection, it may be tolerated, but when the creed becomes a deed it awakens fanatical opposition. This breeds schism. A person cannot be popular who gets

the reputation of being a human alarm clock. The primitive instinct in regard to an alarm clock is to stop it. If Cerbonius had possessed the tact necessary to a man in his position, he would not only have done his duty, but he would have done it at the time most convenient to the greatest number. His virtue was unseasonable; but between a man of unseasonable virtue and an abandoned character who has no virtue at all, there is a great difference. It is just this difference which the majority of people will not see. They make no distinction between one who deliberately offends against the eternal verities and one who accidentally tramples upon a temporary verity that he didn't know was there.

Most of our quarrels do not concern absolute right and wrong; they arise from disputes about the time of day. Two persons may have the same qualities and convictions and yet never agree. An ironical fate sets them at cross purposes and they never meet without irritating contradictions. It is all because their moods do not synchronize. One is always a little too slow, the other a little too fast. When one is in fine fettle the other is just beginning to get tired. They are equally serious, but never on the same occasion, and so each accuses the other of heartless frivolity. They have an equal appreciation of a pleasantry, but they never see it at the same instant. One gives it an uproarious welcome when the other is speeding the parting guest.

Two quick-tempered people may live together very comfortably so long as they lose their tempers simultaneously; they are then ready to make up at the same time. They get on like an automobile by a series of small explosions accurately timed. But when a quick-tempered person is unequally yoked with one who is slow to wrath, the case is difficult. The slowness causes continual apprehension. The fuse burns so deliberately that it seems to have gone out and then the explosion comes. In such cases there can be no adequate explanation. The offender would apologize if he could remember what the offence was, and he doesn't dare to ask.

Said one theologian to another: "The difference between us is that your God is my Devil." This involved more than the mere matter of nomenclature. It upset the spiritual time-table and caused disastrous collisions. When one good man set forth valiantly to fight the Devil, the other would charge him with disturbing his worship.

The fact that one man's work is another man's play is equally fruitful in misunderstandings. The proverbial irritability of the literary and artistic tribes arises in part from this cause. They feel that they are never taken seriously. When we go to a good play we find it so easy to be amused that we do not realize what hard work it is for those whose business it is to be amusing. The better the work, the more effortless it seems to us. On a summer afternoon we take up a novel in a mood which to the conscientious novelist seems sacrilege. He has

thrown all the earnestness of his nature into it, and he wants his message to be received in the same spirit. We have earnestness of nature too, but we have expended it in other directions. Having finished our work, we take our rest by reading his. It is a pleasant way to pass the time. This enrages the novelist, and he writes essays to rebuke us. He calls us Philistines and other hard names, and says that we are incapable of appreciating literary art.

But what is our offence? We have used his work for our own purpose, which was to rest our minds. We got out of it what at the time we needed. Does he not act in very much the same way? Did we not see him at the town-meeting when a very serious question concerning the management of the town poor-house was to be settled? It was a time when every good citizen should have shown his interest by speaking an earnest word. Unmindful of all this, he sat through the meeting with the air of an amused outsider. He paid little attention to the weighty arguments of the selectmen, but noted down all their slips in grammar. He confessed unblushingly that he attended the meeting simply to get a little local colour. What is to become of the country when a taxpayer will take the duties of citizenship so lightly?

These recriminations go on endlessly. Because we do not see certain qualities in action, we deny their existence. The owl has a reputation for sedentary habits and unpractical wisdom, simply because he keeps different business hours from those to which we are accustomed. Could we look in on him during the rush time, we would find him a hustling fellow. He has no time to waste on unremunerative meditation. This is his busy night. How ridiculous is the sleepiness of the greater part of the animal world! There is the lark nodding for hours on his perch. They say he never really wakes up—at least, nobody has seen him awake.

There is a pedagogical theory according to which each individual in his early life repeats quite accurately the history of mankind up to date. He passes through all the successive stages in the history of the race, with a few extra flourishes now and then to indicate the surprises which the future may have in store for us. The history of civilization becomes, for the initiated, the rehearsal of the intensely interesting drama of the nursery and the schoolroom. It lacks the delicacy of the finished performance, but it presents the arguments clearly enough and suggests the necessary stage business. The young lady who attempts to guide a group of reluctant young cave-dwellers from one period in human culture to another is not surprised at any of their tantrums. Her only anxiety is lest some form of barbarism appropriate to their condition may have been skipped. Her chief function is like that of the chorus in the Greek tragedy, to explain to the audience each dramatic situation as it unfolds.

I should not like to take the responsibility of running such an excel-

lent theory into the ground, yet it does seem to me that it might be carried further. Granted that childhood is innocent savagery and that adolescence is gloriously barbaric, what is the matter with mature life? Does it not have any remnants of primitiveness? Does not Tennyson write of "the grey barbarian?"

The transitions from primitive savagery to civilization which took the race centuries to accomplish are repeated by the individual, not once but many times. After we get the knack of it, we can run over the alphabet of human progress backward as well as forward.

Exit Troglodyte. Enter Philosopher discoursing on disinterested virtue. Re-enter Troglodyte. Such dramatic transformations may be expected by merely changing the subject of the conversation.

I remember sitting, one Sunday afternoon, on a vine-covered piazza reading to a thoughtful and irascible friend. The book was Martineau's *Endeavours after the Christian Life*. In the middle of the second discourse my friend's dog rushed into the street to attack the dog of a passer-by. It was one of those sudden and unpredictable antipathies to which the members of the canine race are subject. My friend, instead of preserving a dignified neutrality, rushed into the fray in the spirit of offensive partisanship, and instantly became involved in an altercation with the gentleman on the sidewalk. Canes were brandished, fierce threats were exchanged, and only by the greatest efforts were the Homeric heroes separated. Returning to his chair, my friend handed me the book, saying, "Now let us go on with our religion." The religion went on as placidly as aforetime. There was no sense of confusion. The wrath of Achilles did not disturb the calm spirituality of Martineau. Each held the centre of the stage for his own moment, and there was no troublesome attempt to harmonize them. Why should there be? Martineau was not talking about dogs.

I know no greater luxury than that of thinking well of my fellowmen. It is a luxury which a person in narrow circumstances who is compelled to live within the limits of strict veracity, sometimes feels to be beyond his means. Yet I think it no harm to indulge in a little extravagance in this direction. The best device for seeing all sorts and conditions of men to advantage is to arrange them in their proper chronological order.

For years it was the custom to speak disparagingly of the "poor whites" of our Southern mountains. Shut off from the main currents of modern life, they seemed unpardonably unprogressive. They were treated as mere degenerates. At last, however, a keener and kindlier observer hit upon a happy phrase. These isolated mountaineers, he said, have retained the characteristic habits of a former generation. They are our "contemporary ancestors." Instantly everything was put in a more favourable light; for we all are disposed to see the good points in our ancestors. After all, the whole offence with which these mountain

people are charged is that they are behind the times. In our bona-fide contemporaries this is a grave fault, but in our ancestors it is pardonable. We do not expect them to live up to our standards, and so we give them credit for living up to their own.

In this case we agree to consider fifty miles of mountain roads, if they be sufficiently bad, as the equivalent of rather more than a hundred years of time. Behind the barrier the twentieth century does not yet exist. Many things may still be winked at for which the later generation may be sternly called to repentance. Then, too, the end of the eighteenth century has some good points of its own. These contemporary ancestors of ours are of good old English stock, and we begin to look upon them with a good deal of family pride.

But when we once accept poor roads as the equivalent of the passage of time, putting people at the other end into another generation, there is no knowing what we may come to in our charitable interpretations. For there are other equally effective non-conductors of thought. By the simple device of not knowing how to read, a man cuts off some thousands of culture years and saves himself from no end of intellectual distractions. He becomes the contemporary of "earth's vigorous, primitive sons." If to his illiteracy he adds native talent and imagination, there is a chance for him to make for himself some of those fine old discoveries which we lose because we got the answer from some blabbing book before we had come to the point of asking the question. Of course the danger is that if he has native talent and imagination he will learn to read, and it must be confessed that for this reason we do not get such a high order of illiterates as formerly.

I once made the acquaintance of an ancient Philosopher. His talents were for cosmogony, and his equipment would have been deemed ample in the days when cosmogony was the fashion. He had meditated much on the genesis of things and had read nothing, so that his speculations were uncontaminated by the investigations of others. He was just the man to construct a perfectly simple and logical theory of the universe, and he did it. His universe was not like that of which our sciences give us imperfect glimpses, but it was very satisfactory to him. He was very fair in dealing with facts; he explained all that could be explained by his system. As the only criterion of a fact which he recognized was that it agreed with his system, there was none left over to trouble him. His manner of thought was so foreign to that of our time that his intellectual ability was not widely appreciated; yet had his birth not been so long delayed, he might have been the founder of a school and have had books written about him. For so far as I could learn, his views of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, were very much like those of the early Greek physicists. Had I taken him as a fellow American, I should have dismissed him

as not up to date; but considering him in the light of an ancient sage, I found much in him to admire.

Once upon the coast of Maine I came upon a huge wooden cylinder. Within it was a smaller one, and in the centre, seated upon a swinging platform, was the owner of the curious contrivance. He was a mild-eyed, pleasant-spoken man, whom it was a pleasure to meet. He explained that this was "The Amphibious Vehicle," and that it would move equally well on land or sea.

"You know," said he, "what the prophet Ezekiel said about the 'wheel in the middle of a wheel'?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Well, this is it."

There was something convincing in this matter-of-fact statement. The "wheel within a wheel" had been to me little more than a figure of speech, but here it was made out of good pine lumber, with a plank in the middle for the living creature to sit on. It was as if I had fallen through a trap-door into another age. Here was a literal-minded contemporary of Ezekiel, who, having heard of the wheel within a wheel, had proceeded at once to make one. I ascended into the precarious seat, and we conversed upon the spiritual and temporal possibilities of the vehicle. I found that on the scriptural argument he was clearly ahead of me, being able to quote chapter and verse with precision, while my references were rather vague. In the field of mechanics he was also my superior. I could not have made the vehicle, having not yet emerged beyond the stone age. As we talked I forgot that we were at the mouth of the Penobscot. We were on the "river of Chebar," and there was no knowing what might happen.

The belated philosophers and inventors, who think the thoughts of the ancient worthies after them, live peaceful lives. What matters it that they are separated by a millennium or two from the society in which they were fitted to shine? They are self-sufficing, and there are few who care to contradict them. It is not so with one who is morally belated. There is something pathetic in the condition of one who cherishes the ambition of being a good man, but who has not informed himself of the present "state of the art."

Now and then an ethical revolution takes place. New ideals are proclaimed, and in their light all things are judged. The public conscience becomes sensitive in regard to courses of conduct which heretofore had been unchallenged. Every such advance involves a waste in established reputations. There are always excellent men who are not aware of what has been going on. They keep on conforming scrupulously to the old standards, being good in the familiar ways that were commended in their youth. After a time they find themselves in an alien world, and in that world they are no longer counted among the best people. The tides of moral enthusiasm are all against them.

The good man feels his solid ground of goodness slipping away from under him. Time has played false with his moral conventionalities. He is like a polar bear on a fast-diminishing iceberg, growling at the Gulf Stream.

When a great evil has been recognized by the world, there is a revision of all our judgments. A new principle of classification is introduced, by which we differentiate the goats from the sheep. It is hard after that to revive the old admirations. The temperance agitation of the last century has not abolished drunkenness, but it has made the conception of a pious, respectable drunkard seem grotesque. It has also reduced the business of liquor-selling to a decidedly lower place in the esteem of the community. When we read to-day of the horrors of the slave trade, we reconstruct in our imagination the character of the slave trader—and a brutal wretch he is. But in his day the Guinea captain held his own with the best. He was a good husband and father, a kind neighbour, a generous benefactor. President Ezra Stiles of Yale College, in his *Literary Diary,* describes such a beautiful character. It was when Dr. Stiles was yet a parish minister in Newport that one of his parishioners died, of whom he wrote: "God had blessed him with a good Estate and he and his Family have been eminent for Hospitality to all and Charity to the poor and afflicted. At his death he recommended Religion to his Children and told them that the world was nothing. The only external blemish on his Character was that he was a little addicted to the marvellous in stories of what he had seen in his Voyages and Travels. But in his Dealings he was punctual, upright, and honest, and (except as to the Flie in the Oyntment, the disposition to tell marvellous Stories of Dangers, Travels, &c.), in all other Things he was of a sober and good moral character, respected and beloved of all, so as to be almost without enemies. He was forward in all the concerns of the Church and Congregation, consulting its Benefit and peaceably falling in with the general sense without exciting quarrels, parties, &c., and even when he differed from his Brethren he so differed from them that they loved him amidst the differences. He was a peaceable man and promoted Peace."

It was in 1773 that this good man died in the odour of sanctity. It is quite incidentally that we learn that "he was for many years a Guinea captain, and had no doubt of the slave trade." His pastor suggests that he might have chosen another business than that of "buying and selling the human species." Still, in 1773, this did not constitute an offence serious enough to be termed a fly in the ointment. In 1785, Dr. Stiles speaks of the slave trade as "a most iniquitous trade in the souls of men." Much may happen in a dozen years in changing one's ideas of moral values. In another generation the civilized world was agreed that the slave trade was piracy. After that there were no fine Christian characters among the slave traders.

There is evidence that at the present time there is an awakening of the social conscience that threatens as great a revolution as that which came with the abolition of the slave trade. Business methods which have been looked upon as consistent with high moral character are being condemned as "the sum of all villainies." The condemnation is not yet universal, and there are still those who are not conscious that anything has happened. The Christian monopolist, ruthlessly crushing out his competitors and using every trick known to the trade, has no more doubts as to the rightfulness of his proceedings than had the good Newport captain in regard to the slave trade.

It is a good time to have his obituary written. His contemporaries appreciate his excellent private virtues, and have been long accustomed to look leniently on his public wrong-doing. The new generation, having agreed to call his methods robbery, may find the obituary eulogies amusing.

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AGNES REPPLIER

Agnes Repplier was born in 1858, of French parentage. She was educated at the Sacred Heart Convent, Torresdale, Pennsylvania and, in 1902, received the degree of Doctor of Literature from the University of Pennsylvania. She has travelled very extensively in Europe. Among her works are *Books and Men*, *Points of View*, *Essays in Miniature*, *Essays in Idleness*, *Varia*, *Points of Friction*, and *Under Dispute*.

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A SHORT DEFENCE OF VILLAINS

AMID the universal greyness that has settled mistily down upon English fiction, amid the delicate drab-coloured shadings and half-lights which require, we are told, so fine a skill in handling, the old-fashioned reader misses, now and then, the vivid colouring of his youth. He misses the slow unfolding of quite impossible plots, the thrilling incidents that were wont pleasantly to arouse his apprehension, and, most of all, two characters once deemed essential to every novel—the hero and the villain. The heroine is left us still, and her functions are far more complicated than in the simple days of yore, when little was required of her save to be beautiful as the stars. She faces now the most intricate problems of life; and she faces them with conscious self-importance, a dismal power of analysis, and a robust candour in

discussing their equivocal aspects that would have sent her buried sister blushing to the wall. There was sometimes a lamentable lack of solid virtue in this fair dead sister, a pitiful human weakness that led to her undoing; but she never talked so glibly about sin. As for the hero, he owes his blandishment to the riotous manner in which his masters handled him. Bulwer strained our endurance and our credulity to the utmost; Disraeli took a step further, and Lothair, the last of his race, perished amid the cruel laughter of mankind.

But the villain! Remember what we owe to him in the past. Think how dear he has become to every rightly constituted mind. And now we are told soberly and coldly, by the thin-blooded novelists of the day, that his absence is one of the crowning triumphs of modern genius, that we have all grown too discriminating to tolerate in fiction a character who we feel does not exist in life. Man, we are reminded, is complex, subtle, unfathomable, made up of good and evil so dexterously intermingled that no one element predominates coarsely over the rest. He is to be studied warily and with misgivings, not classified with brutal ease into the virtuous and bad. It is useless to explain to these analysts that the pleasure we take in meeting a character in a book does not always depend on our having known him in the family circle, or encountered him in our morning paper; though, judged even by this stringent law, the villain holds his own. Accept Balzac's rule, and exclude from fiction not only all which might not really happen, but all which has not really happened in truth, and we should still have studies enough in total depravity to darken all the novels in Christendom.

What murder of romance was ever so wanton, so tragic, and so sombre as that which gave to the Edinburgh highway the name of Gabriel's Road? There, in the sweet summer afternoon, fresh with the breath of primroses and cowslips, the young tutor cut the throats of his two little pupils, in a mad, inexplicable revenge for their childish talebearing. Taken redhanded in the deed, he met with swift retribution from the furious populace; and the same hour which witnessed the crime saw his pinioned corpse dangling from the nearest tree, with the bloody knife hung in awful mockery around his neck. Thus the murder and its punishment conspired to make the lonely road a haunted path, ghost-ridden, terrible; where women shivered and hurried on, and little boys, creepy with fear, scampered by, breathless, in the dusk; seeing before them always, on the ragged turf, two small, piteous, blood-smeared bodies, and hearing ever, overhead, the rattle of the rusty knife against the felon's bones. The highway, with its unholy associations discreetly perpetuated in its name, became an education to the good people of Edinburgh, and taught them the value of emotions. They must have indistinctly felt what Mr. Louis Stevenson has so well described, the subtle harmony that unites an evil deed to its

location. "Some places," he says, "speak distinctly. Certain dark gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots, again, seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable." And is all this fine and delicate sentiment, all this skilful playing with horror and fear, to be lost to fiction, merely because, as De Quincey reluctantly admits, "the majority of murderers are incorrect characters"? May we not forgive their general incorrectness for the sake of their literary and artistic value? Shall Charles Lamb's testimony count for nothing, when we remember his comfortable allusion to "kind, light-hearted Wainwright"? And what shall we think of Edward Fitzgerald, the gentlest and least hurtful of Englishmen, abandoning himself, in the clear and genial weather, to the delights of Tacitus, "full of pleasant atrocity"?

Repentant villains, I must confess, are not greatly to my mind. They sacrifice their artistic to their ethical value, and must be handled with consummate skill to escape a suspicious flavour of Sunday-school romance. The hardened criminal, disarmed and converted by the innocent attractions of childhood, is a favourite device of poets and story-writers who cater to the sentiments of maternity; but it is wiser to lay no stress upon the permanency of such conversions. That swift and sudden yielding to a gentle emotion or a noble aspiration, which is one of the undying traits of humanity, attracts us often by the very force of its evanescence, by the limitations which prove its truth. But the slow, stern process of regeneration is not an emotional matter, and cannot be convincingly portrayed with a few facile touches in the last chapter of a novel. Thackeray knew better than this, when he showed us Becky Sharp touched and softened by her good little sister-in-law; heartsick now and then of her own troublesome schemes, yet sinking inevitably lower and lower through the weight of overmastering instincts and desires. She can aspire intermittingly to a cleaner life, but she can never hope to reach it. The simple literature of the past is curiously rich in these pathetic transient glimpses into fallen nature's brighter side. Where can we see depicted with more tenderness and truth the fitful relenting of man's brutality after it has wrought the ruin it devised, than in the fine old ballad of *Edom O'Gordon?* The young daughter of the house of Rodes is lowered from the walls of the burning castle, and the cruel Gordon spears transfix her as she falls. She lies dead, in her budding girlhood, at the feet of her father's foe, and his heart is strangely stirred and troubled when he looks at her childish face.

O bonnie, bonnie was hir mouth,
And cherry were hir cheiks,
And clear, clear was hir yellow hair,
Whereupon the reid bluid dreips.

Then wi' his spear he turned hir owre,
O gin hir face was wan!
He sayd, "You are the first that eir
I wisht alive again."

He turned hir owre and owre again,
O gin hir skin was whyte!
"I might hae spared that bonnie face
To hae been sum man's delyte."

It is pleasant to know that the ruthless butcher was promptly pursued and slain for his crime, but it is finer still to realize that brief moment of bitterness and shame. I have sometimes thought that Rossetti's Sister Helen would have gained in artistic beauty if, after those three days of awful watching were over, after the glowing fragment of wax had melted in the flames, and her lover's soul had passed her, sighing on the wind, there had come to the stricken girl a pang of supreme regret, an impulse of mad desire to undo the horror she had wrought. The conscience of a sinner, to use a striking phrase of Mr. Brownell's, "is doubtless readjusted rather than repudiated altogether," and there is an absolute truthfulness in these sudden relapses into grace.

For this reason, doubtless, I find Mr. Blackmore's villains, with all their fascination and power, a shade too heavily, or at least too monotonously darkened. Parson Chowne is a veritable devil, and it is only his occasional humour—manifested grimly in deeds, not words—which enables us to bear the weight of his insupportable wickedness. The introduction of the naked savages as an outrage to village propriety; the summons to church, when he has a mind to fire the ricks of his parishioners—these are the life-giving touches which mellow down this overwrought figure, this black and scowling thunderbolt of humanity. Perhaps, also, Mr. Blackmore, in his laudable desire for picturesqueness, lays too much stress on the malignant aspect, the appropriate physical condition of his sinners. From Parson Chowne's "wondrous unfathomable face," which chills every heart with terror, to the "red glare" in Donovan Bulrag's eyes, there is always something exceptional about these worthies, to indicate to all beholders what manner of men they are. One is reminded of Charles II protesting, not unnaturally, against the perpetual swarthiness of stage villains. "We never see a rogue in a play but we clap on him a black periwig," complained the dark-skinned monarch, with a sense of personal grievance in this forced association between complexion and crime. It was the same subtle inspiration which prompted Kean to play Shylock in a red wig that suggested to Wilkie Collins Count Fosco's admirable size. The passion for embroidered waistcoats and fruit tarts, the petted white mice, the

sympathetic gift of pastry to the organ-grinder's monkey, all the little touches which go to build up this colossal, tender-hearted, remorseless, irresistible scoundrel are of interest and value to the portrait, but his fat is as essential as his knavery. It is one of those master strokes of genius which breaks away from all accepted traditions to build up a new type, perfect and unapproachable. We can no more imagine a thin Fosco than a melancholy Dick Swiveller, or a light-hearted Ravenswood.

Mr. Andrew Lang, who enjoys upon all occasions the courage of his convictions, has, in one of those pleasant papers, "At the Sign of the Ship," given utterance to a sentiment so shockingly at variance with the prevalent theory of fiction, that the reader is divided between admiration for his boldness and a vague surprise that a man should speak such words and live. There is a cheerfulness, too, about Mr. Lang's heterodoxy, a smiling ignorance of his own transgression, that warms our hearts and weakens our upbraiding. "The old simple scheme," he says, "in which you had a real unmitigated villain, a heroine as pure as snow or flame, and a crowd of good ordinary people, gave us more agreeable reading, and reading not, I think, more remote from truth, than is to be found in Dr. Ibsen's *Ghosts* or in his *Pillars of Society*." Now to support such a statement would be unscrupulous; to condemn it, dispiriting; but I wonder if the "real unmitigated villain" is quite so simple a product as Mr. Lang appears to imagine. May not his absence from literature be owing as much to the limitations as to the disregard of modern realists? Is he, in truth, so easily drawn as to be unworthy of their subtle and discriminating pens? Is Sir Giles Overreach a mere child's toy in comparison with Consul Bernick, and is Brian de Bois-Guilbert unworthy to rank with Johann Tönnesen and Oswald Alving? A villain must be a thing of power, handled with delicacy and grace. He must be wicked enough to excite our aversion, strong enough to arouse our fear, human enough to awaken some transient gleam of sympathy. We must triumph in his downfall, yet not barbarously nor with contempt, and the close of his career must be in harmony with all its previous development. Mrs. Pennell has told us the story of some old Venetian witches, who were converted from their dark ways, and taught the charms of peace and godliness; but who would desire or credit the conversion of a witch? The potency of evil lies within her to the end; and when, by a few muttered words, she can raise a hell storm on the ocean; when her eye's dim fire can wither the strength of her enemy; or when, with a lock of hair and a bit of wax, she can consume him with torturing pain, who will welcome her neighbourly advances? The proper and artistic end of a witch is at the stake—blue flames curling up to heaven, and a handful of grey ashes scattered to the wind; or, by the working of a stronger spell, she

may be stiffened into stone, and doomed to stand forever on some desolate moor, where, underneath starless skies, her evil feet have strayed; or perhaps that huge black cat, her sinister attendant, has completed his ninth year of servitude to nine successive witches, and, by virtue of the power granted him at their expiration, he may whisk her off bodily on St. John's Eve, to offer her a living holocaust to Satan. These are possibilities in strict sympathy with her character and history, if not with her inclinations; the last is in especial accordance with sound Italian tradition, and all reveal what Heine calls "the melancholy pleasurable awe, the dark sweet horror, of Medieval ghost fancies." But a converted witch, walking demurely to vesper service, gossiping with good, garrulous old women on the doorstep, or holding an innocent child within her withered arms—the very thought repels us instinctively, and fires us with a sharp mistrust. Have a care, you foolish young mother, and snatch your baby to your breast; for even now he waxes paler and paler, as those cold, malignant heart-throbs chill his breath, and wear his little life away.

The final disposition of a mere earthly villain should likewise be a matter of artistic necessity, not a harsh trampling of arrogant virtue upon prostrate vice. There is no mistake so fatal as that of injustice to the evil element of a novel or a play. We all know how, when Portia pushes her triumphant casuistry a step too far, our sympathies veer obstinately around to Shylock's side, and refuse to be readjusted before the curtain falls. Perhaps Shakespeare intended this—who knows?—and threw in Gratiano's last jeers to madden, not the usurer, but the audience. Or perhaps in Elizabeth's day, as in King John's, people had not grown so finical about the feelings of a Jew, and it is only the chilly tolerance of our enlightened age which prevents our enjoying as we should the devout prejudices of our ancestors. But when, in a modern novel, guiltless of all this picturesque superstition, we see the sinner treated with a narrow, nagging sort of severity, our unregenerate nature rebels stoutly against such a manifest lack of balance. Not long ago, I chanced to read a story which actually dared to have a villain for a hero, and I promised myself much pleasure from so original and venturesome a step. But how did the very popular authoress treat her own creation? In the first place, when rescued from a truly feminine haze of hints, and dark whispers, and unsubstantiated innuendoes, the hapless man is proven guilty of but three offences: he takes opium, he ejects his tenants, and he tries, not very successfully, to mesmerize his wife. Now, opium-eating is a vice, the punishment for which is borne by the offender, and which merits as much pity as contempt; rack-renting is an unpardonable, but not at all a thrilling misdemeanour; and, in these days of psychological research, there are many excellent men who would not shrink from making hypnotic experiments on their

grandmothers. In consequence, however, of such feeble atrocities, the hero-villain is subjected to a species of outlawry at the hands of all the good people in the book. His virtuous cousin makes open and highly honourable love to his virtuous wife, who responds with hearty alacrity. His virtuous cousin's still more virtuous brother comes within an ace of murdering him in cold blood, through motives of the purest philanthropy. Finally, one of these virtuous young men lets loose on him his family ghost, deliberately unsealing the spectral abiding-place; and, while the virtuous wife clings around the virtuous cousin's neck, and forbids him tenderly to go to the rescue, the accommodating spirit—who seems to have no sort of loyalty to the connexion—slays the villain at his own doorstep, and leaves the coast free for a second marriage service. Practically, the device is an admirable one, because, when the ghost retires once more to his seclusion, nobody can well be convinced of manslaughter, and a great deal of scandal is saved. But, artistically, there is something repellent in this open and shameless persecution; in three persons and a hobgoblin conspiring against one poor man. Our sentiment is diverted from its proper channel, our emotions are manifestly incorrect.

"How are you to get up the sympathies of the audience in a legitimate manner," asks Mr. Vincent Crummles, "if there isn't a little man contending against a big one?—unless there's at least five to one, and we haven't hands enough for that business in our company." Would the noble-hearted Mr. Crummles have thought of reversing this natural order of things, and declaring victory for the multitude? How would human nature, in the provinces, have supported so novel and hazardous an innovation? Why should human nature, out of the provinces, be assumed to have outgrown its simple, chivalrous instincts? A good, strong, designing, despicable villain, or even villainess, a fair start, a stout fight, an artistic overthrow, and triumphant Virtue smiling modestly beneath her orange blossom—shall we ever be too old and world-worn to love these old and world-worn things?

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LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

Louise Imogen Guiney was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1861. She was educated at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Providence, R. I., and began her literary career by contributing to various periodicals. Among her published works are *Songs at the Start*, *Goose-quill Papers*, *The White Sail*, *Brownies and Bogies*, *Monsieur Henri*, *A Roadside Harp*, *A Little English Gallery*, and *Patrins*, from which the following essay is taken.

THE PUPPY: A PORTRAIT

HE IS the sixty-sixth in direct descent, and his coat is like amber damask, and his blue eyes are the most winning that you ever saw. They seem to proclaim him as much too good for the vulgar world, and worthy of such zeal and devotion as you, only you, could give to his helpless infancy. And, with a blessing upon the Abbot of Clairvaux, who is popularly supposed to have invented his species, you carry him home from the Bench show, and in the morning, when you are told that he has eaten a yard and a quarter of the new stair carpet, you look into those dreamy eyes again; no reproach shall reach him, you swear, because you stand forevermore between. And he grows great in girth, and in character the very chronicle and log book of his noble ancestry; he may be erratic, but he puts charm and distinction into everything he does. Your devotedness to his welfare keeps him healthful and honest, and absurdly partial to the squeak of your boots, or the imperceptible aroma which, as it would seem, you dispense, a mile away. The thing which pleases you most is his ingenuous childishness. It is a fresh little soul in the rogue's body:

> Him Nature giveth for defence,
> His formidable innocence.

You see him touch pitch every day, associating with the sewer-building Italians, with their strange oaths; with affected and cynical "sales ladies" in shops (she of the grape stall being clearly his too-seldom-relenting goddess); and with the bony Thomas cat down street, who is an acknowledged anarchist, and whose infrequent suppers have made him sour-complexioned toward society, and "thereby disallowed him," as dear Walton would say, "to be a competent judge." But Pup loses nothing of his sweet congenital absent-mindedness; your bringing up sits firmly upon him and keeps him young. He expands into a giant, and such as meet him on a lonely road have religion until he has passed. Seven, nine, ten months go over his white-hooded head; and behold, he is nigh a year old, and still Uranian. He begins to accumulate facts, for his observation of late has not been unscientific; but he cannot generalize, and on every first occasion he puts his foot in it. A music box transfixes him; the English language, proceeding from a parrot in a cage, shakes his reason for days. A rocking-horse on a piazza draws from him the only bad word he knows. He sees no obligation to respect persons with mumps, or with very red beards, or with tools and dinner pails; in the last instance, he acts advisedly against honest labour, as he perceives that most overalls have kicks in them. Following Plato, he would reserve his haughty demeanour for

slaves and servants. Moreover, before the undemonstrated he comes hourly to a pause. If a wheelbarrow, unknown hitherto among vehicles, approach him from his suburban hill, he is aware of the supernatural; but he will not flinch, as he was wont to do once; rather will he stand four-square, with eyebrows and crinkled ears vocal with wonder and horror. Then the man back of the moving bulk speaks over his truck to you, in the clear April evening: "Begorra, 'tis his furrust barry!" and you love the man for his accurate, affectionate sense of the situation. When Pup is too open-mouthed and curious, when he dilates, in fact, with the wrong emotion, it reflects upon you, and reveals the flaws in your educational system. He blurts out dire things before fine ladies. If he hear one of them declaiming, with Delsarte gestures, in a drawing-room, he appears in the doorway, undergoing symptoms of acutest distress, and singing her down, professedly for her own sake; and afterward he pities her so, and is so chivalrously drawn toward her in her apparent aberration, that he lies for hours on the flounce of her gown, eyeing you, and calumniating you somewhat by his vicarious groans and sighs. But ever after, Pup admits the recitation of tragic selections as one human folly more.

He is so big and so unsophisticated, that you daily feel the incongruity, and wish, in a vague sort of way, that there was a street boarding school in your town, where he could rough it away from an adoring family, and learn to be responsible and self-opinionated, like other dogs. He has a maternal uncle, on the estate across the field: a double-chinned tawny ogre, good-natured as a baby, and utterly rash and improvident, whose society you cannot covet for your tender charge. One fine day, Pup is low with the distemper, and evidence is forthcoming that he has visited, under his uncle's guidance, the much-deceased lobster thrown into hotel tubs. After weeks of anxious nursing, rubbings in oil, and steamings with vinegar, during which time he coughs and wheezes in a heartbreaking imitation of advanced consumption, he is left alone a moment on his warm rug, with the thermometer in his special apartment steady at seventy-eight degrees, and plunges out into the winter blast. Hours later, he returns; and the vision of his vagabond uncle, slinking around the house, announces to you in what companionship he has been. Plastered to the skull in mud and icicles, wet to the bone, jaded, guilty, and doomed now, of course, to die, Pup retires behind the kitchen table. The next morning he is well. The moral, to him at least, is that our uncle is an astute and unappreciated person, and a genuine man of the world.

Yet our uncle, with all his laxity, has an honourable heart, and practises the *maxima reverentia puero*. It is not from him that Pup shall learn his little share of iniquity. Meanwhile, illumination is nearing him in the shape of a little old white bull terrier of uncertain parentage, with one ear, and a scar on his neck, and depravity in the very lift of his

stumped tail. This active imp, recently come to live in the neighbourhood, fills you with forebodings. You know that Pup must grow up sometime, must take his chances, must fight and be fooled, must err and repent, must exhaust the dangerous knowledge of the great university for which his age at last befits him. The ordeal will harm neither him nor you: and yet you cannot help an anxious look at him, full four feet tall from crown to toe, and with a leg like an obelisk, preserving unseasonably his ambiguous early air of exaggerated goodness. One day he follows you from the station, and meets the small Mephisto on the homeward path. They dig a bone together, and converse behind trees; and when you call Pup, he snorts his initial defiance, and dances away in the tempter's wake. Finally, your whistle compels him, and he comes soberly forward. By this time the ringleader terrier is departing, with a diabolical wink. You remember that, a moment before, he stood on a mound, whispering in your innocent's beautiful dangling ear, and you glance sharply at Pup. Yes, it has happened! He will never seem quite the same again, with

—the contagion of the world's slow stain

beginning in his candid eyes. He is a dog now. He knows.

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GEORGE SANTAYANA

George Santayana was born at Madrid in 1863 and came to the United States at the age of nine. He went to Harvard and King's College, Cambridge. He returned to Harvard where he was professor of philosophy from 1907 to 1912. He affords a rare example of a philosopher who is able to write lucid and beautiful prose. He is also a poet. His works include *Sonnets and Other Verses*, *The Sense of Beauty*, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, *The Life of Reason*, *Three Philosophical Poets*, *Winds of Doctrine*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Little Essays* by permission of Messrs. Constable and Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

WAR

TO FIGHT is a radical instinct; if men have nothing else to fight over they will fight over words, fancies, or women, or they will fight because they dislike each other's looks, or because they have met walking in opposite directions. To knock a thing down, especially if it is cocked at an arrogant angle, is a deep delight to the blood. To fight for a reason and in a calculating spirit is something your true warrior

despises; even a coward might screw his courage up to such a reasonable conflict. The joy and glory of fighting lie in its pure spontaneity and consequent generosity; you are not fighting for gain, but for sport and for victory. Victory, no doubt, has its fruits for the victor. If fighting were not a possible means of livelihood the bellicose instinct could never have established itself in any long-lived race. A few men can live on plunder, just as there is room in the world for some beasts of prey; other men are reduced to living on industry, just as there are diligent bees, ants, and herbivorous kine. But victory need have no good fruits for the people whose army is victorious. That it sometimes does so is an ulterior and blessed circumstance hardly to be reckoned upon.

Since barbarism has its pleasures it naturally has its apologists. There are panegyrists of war who say that without a periodical bleeding a race decays and loses its manhood. Experience is directly opposed to this shameless assertion. It is war that wastes a nation's wealth, chokes its industries, kills its flower, narrows its sympathies, condemns it to be governed by adventurers, and leaves the puny, deformed, and unmanly to breed the next generation. Internecine war, foreign and civil, brought about the greatest set-back which the life of reason has ever suffered; it exterminated the Greek and Italian aristocracies. Instead of being descended from heroes, modern nations are descended from slaves; and it is not their bodies only that show it. After a long peace, if the conditions of life are propitious, we observe a people's energies bursting their barriers; they become aggressive on the strength they have stored up in their remote and unchecked development. It is the unmutilated race, fresh from the struggle with nature (in which the best survive, while in war it is often the best that perish), that descends victoriously into the arena of nations and conquers disciplined armies at the first blow, becomes the military aristocracy of the next epoch and is itself ultimately sapped and decimated by luxury and battle, and merged at last into the ignoble conglomerate beneath. Then, perhaps, in some other virgin country a genuine humanity is again found, capable of victory because unbled by war. To call war the soil of courage and virtue is like calling debauchery the soil of love.

Blind courage is an animal virtue indispensable in a world full of dangers and evils where a certain insensibility and dash are requisite to skirt the precipice without vertigo. Such animal courage seems therefore beautiful rather than desperate or cruel, and being the lowest and most instinctive of virtues it is the one most widely and sincerely admired. In the form of steadiness under risks rationally taken, and perseverance so long as there is a chance of success, courage is a true virtue; but it ceases to be one when the love of danger, a useful passion when danger is unavoidable, begins to lead men into evils which it was unnecessary to face. Bravado, provocativeness, and a gambler's

instinct, with a love of hitting hard for the sake of exercise, is a temper which ought already to be counted among the vices rather than the virtues of man. To delight in war is a merit in the soldier, a dangerous quality in the captain, and a positive crime in the statesman.

The panegyrist of war places himself on the lowest level on which a moralist or a patriot can stand and shows as great a want of refined feeling as of right reason. For the glories of war are all blood-stained, delirious, and infected with crime; the combative instinct is a savage prompting by which one man's good is found in another's evil. The existence of such a contradiction in the moral world is the original sin of nature whence flows every other wrong. He is a willing accomplice of that perversity in things who delights in another's discomfiture or in his own, and craves the blind tension of plunging into danger without reason, or the idiot's pleasure in facing a pure chance. To find joy in another's trouble is, as man is constituted, not unnatural, though it is wicked; and to find joy in one's own trouble, though it be madness, is not yet impossible for man. These are the chaotic depths of that dreaming nature out of which humanity has to grow.

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FRANK MORE COLBY

Colby, who was born in 1865, was a versatile and industrious writer, yet he never became widely known. This was partly because much of his work was scattered over various magazines, and partly because a good deal of it appeared anonymously. Yet a few discriminating readers knew him and recognized in his work sterling prose that will last. Some of the best of this has been collected into two volumes under the title of *The Colby Essays* by Clarence Day, Jr. Colby died in 1925.

The following essay has been taken from *Tailor Blood*—the second volume of *The Colby Essays*—by permission of Messrs. Dodd, Mead and Co.

THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR

OUTWARDLY you may be on friendly terms with the people next door, but, if the truth were known, you do not think much of them. Their ways may be well enough, but they are not your ways. It is not hatred, far less envy; neither is it contempt exactly. Only you do not understand why they live as they do. You account for some things by the differences in social traditions. They were not brought up as you were—not that they are to blame for that, but certain advan-

tages that you had were denied them. Rude noises come from that house next door that you would not expect from people in their station. There is nothing that so reveals the breeding of the inmates as the noises that come from a house. Laughter late at night, when you want to sleep—how coarse it sounds! Then there is that young woman who sings. What voices the people next door always have, and what a repertoire of songs! Why do they never try a new one? There must be new songs from time to time within the means of anyone, but you never hear them next door. Years after a song is forgotten elsewhere it goes on next door. A popular song never dies. The people next door rescue it after it is hounded off the street and warm it into eternal life.

And so it goes. Everything they do shows just what sort of people they are. Look at the things they hang out in their back yard. If your things looked like that you would at least keep them indoors. It is not that they are so old, though for the matter of that you should think they would be afraid of germs, but they were chosen with such monstrously bad taste in the first place. What in the world do people want to furnish a house with things like that for? They must have cost enough, too, and for that amount of money they could have bought —but what is the use of talking? There are distinctions that you never can make people feel.

That cook of theirs you would not have in your house for five minutes. It must surely be unsafe to eat what a person like that would cook. A certain degree of neatness is indispensable, and people who were used to things would insist upon it. That is the trouble with the people next door—they are not used to things. It is easy enough to put a stop to certain matters if you take them in hand, such, for instance, as those awful Irish whoops that issue every evening from their kitchen windows. But the people next door do not mind—that is the sum of it—they simply do not mind things that would drive you stark mad. They can sleep through their own hideous noise, eat their own ill-prepared food, put up with anything, just because it is theirs.

Yesterday a correspondent wrote to a newspaper complaining of the carpet beating that went on next door. Hitherto he had thought those people were gentlefolk. He doubts it now. The people next door are always doing things that enable you to "size them up." You size them up ten or fifteen times a day. The women in your family size them up much oftener. That doubt of next-door gentility is universal.

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GEORGE ADE

George Ade was born in Indiana in 1866. After some newspaper work at Lafayette, Indiana, he joined the staff of the *Chicago Record*

in 1890. He has written some successful plays, but it is as a humorist that he has chiefly attracted attention. His writings include *Fables in Slang*, *More Fables*, *Fifty Modern Fables*, *Hand-Made Fables*, and the plays *The Country Chairman* and *The College Widow*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Single Blessedness and Other Joys* by permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Doran, and Co., Inc. and Messrs. Methuen and Co., Ltd.

CHRISTMAS IN LONDON

WHEN you set out to qualify as a circumnavigator, your whole time-table must be adjusted to seasonal conditions in India. Only in winter may the tourist in Agra, Jaipur, and Benares find protection under a pith helmet. Therefore, when two of us planned to go around the orange, following the most beaten track to the east, we began guessing at dates and destinations and learned that we would have to make an early start to avoid being trapped by the deadly heat so picturesquely advertised by Mr. Kipling.

All this copious prelude so that you may understand why we found ourselves in London at Christmas time. One needs an alibi in a case of that kind. Do you remember the melodrama, "Alone in London"? We appeared in it.

London on Christmas Eve was abuzz with gaiety (modified British gaiety) and crowds. We awoke on Christmas morning to find that during the night the human race had evaporated.

We got this first at the egg ceremony in the lonesome grill. It was repeated by the field marshal who stood at the main entrance. Also, this particular Christmas was spoken of very highly by the musical comedy hero who assigned the rooms.

Taking one 25th of December with another and striking an average, we would have said that this London Christmas was not even a dismal suggestion of the real thing.

A soft gloom covered the earth. The sky was a sombre canopy, compromising between a grey and a dun. If you should mix battleship colour with the shade used in painting refrigerator cars, you might get an approximation of the effect. The light came from nowhere. Not freezing weather, but in the sluggish air a chill which cut right through top-coats.

But a jolly Christmas, nevertheless, because the fog had lifted and no rain was falling.

Probably we had been spoiled in the matter of Christmases. Our romantic specifications called for white draperies on the hillside, feathered plumes surmounting each thicket, the smoke from every chimney

going straight up, and a steel-cold sun hanging in burnished splendour overhead.

We had made no plans for the day, somehow feeling that every Christmas works out its own programme. Certainly we had looked forward to being in London on the day which English-speaking people have garlanded with so much of homely sentiment.

Probably we had a lot of Dickens still lurking in our systems. We rather hoped to find, in London at Yuletide, the carols ringing out on the frosty air, while the backlog roared, the punch-bowl was wreathed with spicy vapours, the boar's head smiled from its pillow of holly and, on every hand, crabbed old gentlemen melted perceptibly before the good cheer of the blessed day and began giving money to crippled children.

It may be that the English Christmas is just what has been represented to us in song and story, but the homeless transient sees no part of it.

As we walked forth that Christmas we found that the metropolis of the world had become merely an emptiness of walls and shutters. If machine-guns had been planted at Trafalgar Square to sweep each radiating thoroughfare, there would have been no fatalities.

Probably behind the high walls (spiked with broken glass) and the drawn shades, the nuts were being cracked and cobwebby bottles of old port were being tenderly operated upon, and Uncle Charleys with shining faces were proposing toasts.

But even a prohibition agent, intent upon compelling merrymakers to find their wassail in grape juice, would have been deceived by the outward solemnity of Christmas in London.

It seems to be the one day in the calendar on which every Englishman retires into his own home and pulls up the drawbridge. Those who have country places go to the country and those who know people having country places put in acceptances weeks ahead. At every hearthstone the relatives who have been shunned during the previous 364 days are stuffed with warm food.

So we were told.

By noon we decided to escape from our hotel. It was so near the Thames that we dared not trust ourselves.

We learned of an old tavern, miles up the river, where a special dinner was served on Christmas Day. Sure enough, we found a bed of coals in a grate, a Pickwick sort of person sitting in front of it, and a head waiter with apologetic side-whiskers.

We made out, as you might say, but if you, reader, are planning to be in Merrie England on Christmas Day, look up the forkings of the ancestral tree and try to discover a relative.

* * *

DAVID GRAYSON

Ray Stannard Baker, who writes studies of rural life under the name of "David Grayson," was born at Lansing, Michigan, in 1870. He studied law and literature at Michigan, and then for some years was occupied with journalism. In 1899 he became associate editor of *McClure's Magazine*. His books include *Adventures in Contentment*, *Adventures in Friendship*, *The Friendly Road*, *Hempfield*, and *Great Possessions*. He has also written a life of President Wilson.

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ON LIVING IN THE COUNTRY

Why risk with men your hard-won gold?
Buy grain and sow—your Brother Dust
Will pay you back a hundredfold—
The earth commits no breach of trust.

Hindu proverb, translated by
Arthur Guiterman

IT IS astonishing how many people there are in cities and towns who have a secret longing to get back into quiet country places, to own a bit of the soil of the earth, and to cultivate it. To some it appears as a troublesome malady only in spring and will be relieved by a whirl or two in country roads, by a glimpse of the hills, or a day by the sea; but to others the homesickness is deeper seated and will be quieted by no hasty visits. These must actually go home.

I have had, in recent years, many letters from friends asking about life in the country, but the longer I remain here, the more I know about it, the less able I am to answer them—at least briefly. It is as though one should come and ask: "Is love worth trying?" or "How about religion?" For country life is to each human being a fresh, strange, original adventure. We enjoy it, or we do not enjoy it, or more probably we do both. It is packed and crowded with the zest of adventure, or it is dull and miserable. We may, if we are skilled enough, make our whole living from the land, or only a part of it, or we may find in a few cherished acres the inspiration and power for other work, whatever it may be. There is many a man whose strength is renewed like that of the wrestler of Irassa every time his feet touch the earth.

Of all places in the world where life can be lived to its fullest and

freest, where it can be met in its greatest variety and beauty, I am convinced that there is none to equal the open country, or the country town. For all country people in these days may have the city—some city or town not too far away; but there are millions of men and women in America who have no country and no sense of the country. What do they not lose out of life!

I know well the disadvantages charged against country life at its worst. At its worst there are long hours and much lonely labour and an income pitifully small. Drudgery, yes, especially for the women, and loneliness. But where is there not drudgery when men are poor—where life is at its worst? I have never seen drudgery in the country comparable for a moment to the dreary and lonely drudgery of the city tenements, city mills, factories, and sweat shops. And in recent years both the drudgery and loneliness of country life have been disappearing before the motor and trolley car, the telephone, the rural post, the gasolene engine. I have seen a machine plant as many potatoes in one day as a man, at hand work, could have planted in a week.

There are indeed a thousand nuisances and annoyances that men must meet who come face to face with nature itself. You have set out your upper acres to peach-trees: and the deer come down from the hills at night and strip the young foliage; or the field-mice in winter, working under the snow, girdle and kill them. The season brings too much rain and the potatoes rot in the ground, the crows steal the corn, the bees swarm when no one is watching, the cow smothers her calf, the hens' eggs prove infertile, and a storm in a day ravages a crop that has been growing all summer. A constant warfare with insects and blights and fungi—a real, bitter warfare, which can cease neither summer nor winter!

It is something to meet, year after year, the quiet implacability of the land. While it is patient, it never waits long for you. There is a chosen time for planting, a time for cultivating, a time for harvesting. You accept the gage thrown down—well and good, you shall have a chance to fight! You do not accept it? There is no complaint. The land cheerfully springs up to wild yellow mustard and dandelion and pigweed—and will be productive and beautiful in spite of you.

Nor can you enter upon the full satisfaction of cultivating even a small piece of land at second hand. To be accepted as One Who Belongs, there must be sweat and weariness.

The other day I was digging with Dick in a ditch that is to run down through the orchard and connect finally with the land drain we put in four years ago. We laid the tile just in the gravel below the silt, about two feet deep, covering the openings with tar paper and then throwing in gravel. It was a bright cool afternoon. In the field below a ploughman was at work: I could see the furrows of the dark earth glisten as he turned it over. The grass in the meadow was a full rich green,

the new chickens were active in their yards, running to the cluck of the hens: already the leaves of the orchard trees showed green. And as I worked there with Dick I had the curious deep feeling of coming somehow into a new and more intimate possession of my own land. For titles do not really pass with signatures and red seals, nor with money changing from one hand to another, but for true possession one must work and serve according to the most ancient law. There is no mitigation and no haggling of price. Those who think they can win the greatest joys of country life on any easier terms are mistaken.

But if one has drained his land, and ploughed it, and fertilized it, and planted it, and harvested it—even though it be only a few acres—how he comes to know and to love every rod of it. He knows the wet spots, and the stony spots, and the warmest and most fertile spots—until his acres have all the qualities of a personality, whose every characteristic he knows. It is so also that he comes to know his horses and cattle and pigs and hens. It is a fine thing, on a warm day in early spring, to bring out the beehives and let the bees have their first flight in the sunshine. What cleanly folk they are! And later to see them coming in yellow all over with pollen from the willows! It is a fine thing to watch the cherries and plum-trees come into blossom, with us about the first of May, while all the remainder of the orchard seems still sleeping. It is a fine thing to see the cattle turned for the first time in spring into the green meadows. It is a fine thing—one of the finest of all—to see and smell the rain in a cornfield after weeks of drought. How it comes softly out of grey skies, the first drops throwing up spatters of dust and losing themselves in the dry soil. Then the clouds sweep forward up the valley, darkening the meadows and blotting out the hills, and then there is the whispering of the rain as it first sweeps across the cornfield. At once what a stir of life! What rustling of the long green leaves. What joyful shaking and swaying of the tassels! And have you watched how eagerly the grooved leaves catch each early drop and, lest there be too little rain after all, conduct it jealously down the stalk where it will soonest reach the thirsty roots? What a fine thing is this to see!

One who thus takes part in the whole process of the year comes soon to have an indescribable affection for his land, his garden, his animals. There are thoughts of his in every tree: memories in every fence corner. Just now, the fourth of June, I walked down past my blackberry patch, now come gorgeously into full white bloom—and heavy with fragrance. I set out these plants with my own hands, I have fed them, cultivated them, mulched them, pruned them, staked them, and helped every year to pick the berries. How could they be otherwise than full of associations! They bear a fruit more beautiful than can be found in any catalogue: and stranger and wilder than in any learned botany-book!

Why, one who comes thus to love a bit of countryside may enjoy it all the year round. When he awakens in the middle of a long winter night he may send his mind out to the snowy fields—I've done it a thousand times!—and visit each part in turn, stroll through the orchard and pay his respects to each tree—in a small orchard one comes to know familiarly every tree as he knows his friends—stop at the strawberry bed, consider the grape trellises, feel himself opening the door of the warm, dark stable and listening to the welcoming whicker of his horses, or visiting his cows, his pigs, his sheep, his hens, or so many of them as he may have.

So much of the best in the world seems to have come fragrant out of fields, gardens, and hillsides. So many truths spoken by the Master Poet come to us exhaling the odours of the open country. His stories were so often of sowers, husbandmen, herdsmen: His similes and illustrations so often dealt with the common and familiar beauty of the fields. "Consider the lilies how they grow." It was on a hillside that He preached His greatest sermon, and when in the last agony He sought a place to meet His God, where did He go but to a garden? A carpenter, you say? Yes, but of this one may be sure: there were gardens and fields all about: He knew gardens, and cattle, and the simple processes of the land: He must have worked in a garden and loved it well.

A country life rather spoils one for the so-called luxuries. A farmer may indeed have a small cash income, but at least he eats at the first table. He may have the sweetest of the milk—there are thousands, perhaps millions of men and women in America who have never in their lives tasted really sweet milk—and the freshest of eggs, and the ripest of fruit. One does not know how good strawberries or raspberries are when picked before breakfast and eaten with the dew still on them. And while he must work and sweat for what he gets, he may have all these things in almost unmeasured abundance, and without a thought of what they cost. A man from the country is often made uncomfortable, upon visiting the city, to find two ears of sweet corn served for twenty or thirty cents, or a dish of raspberries at twenty-five or forty—and neither, even at their best, equal in quality to those he may have fresh from the garden every day. One need say this in no boastful spirit, but as a simple statement of the fact: for fruits sent to the city are nearly always picked before they are fully ripe—and lose that last perfection of flavour which the sun and the open air impart: and both fruits and vegetables, as well as milk and eggs, suffer more than most people think from handling and shipment. These things can be set down as one of the make-weights against the familiar presentation of the farmer's life as a hard one.

One of the greatest curses of mill or factory work, and with much city work of all kinds, is its interminable monotony; the same process repeated hour after hour and day after day. In the country there is

indeed monotonous work, but rarely monotony. No task continues very long: everything changes infinitely with the seasons. Processes are not repetitive but creative. Nature hates monotony, is ever changing and restless: brings up a storm to drive the haymakers from their hurried work in the fields, sends rain to stop the ploughing, or a frost to hurry the apple harvest. Everything is full of adventure and vicissitude! A man who has been a farmer for two hours at the mowing must suddenly turn blacksmith when his machine breaks down and tinker with wrench and hammer; and later in the day he becomes dairyman, farrier, harness-maker, merchant. No kind of wheat but is grist to his mill, no knowledge that he cannot use! And who is freer to be a citizen than he: freer to take his part in town meeting and serve his state in some one of the innumerable small offices which form the solid blocks of organization beneath our commonwealth?

I thought last fall that corn-husking came as near being monotonous work as any I had ever done in the country. I presume in the cornfields of the West where the husking goes on for weeks at a time it probably does grow really monotonous. But I soon found that there was a curious counter-reward attending even a process as repetitive as this.

I remember one afternoon in particular. It was brisk and cool with ragged clouds like flung pennants in a poverty-stricken sky, and the hills were a hazy brown, rather sad to see, and in one of the apple-trees at the edge of the meadows the crows were holding their mournful autumn Parliament.

At such work as this one's mind often drops asleep or at least goes dreaming, except for the narrow margin of awareness required for the simple process of the hands. Its orders have indeed been given: you must kneel here, pull aside the stalks one by one, rip down the husks and twist off the ear—and there is the pile for the stripped stalks, and here the basket for the gathered corn, and these processes infinitely repeated.

While all this is going on, the mind itself wanders off to its own sweet pastures, upon its own dear adventures—or rests or plays. It is in these times that most of the airy flying things of this beautiful world come home to us—things that heavy-footed reason never quite overtakes, nor stodgy knowledge ever knows. I think sometimes we thus intercept thoughts never intended for us at all, or uncover strange primitive memories of older times than these—racial memories.

At any rate the hours pass and suddenly the mind comes home again; it comes home from its wanderings refreshed, stimulated, happy. And nowhere, whether in cities, or travelling in trains, or sailing upon the sea, have I so often felt this curious enrichment as I have upon this hillside, working alone in field or garden or orchard. It seems to come up out of the soil, or respond to the touch of growing things.

What makes any work interesting is the fact that one can make experiments, try new things, develop specialties, and *grow*. And where can he do this with such success as on the land—and in direct contact with nature? The possibilities are here infinite—new machinery, spraying, seed-testing, fertilizers, experimentation with new varieties—a thousand and one methods, all creative, which may be tried in that great essential struggle of the farmer or gardener to command all the forces of nature.

Because there are farmers, and many of them, who do not experiment and do not grow, but make their occupation a veritable black drudgery, this is no reason for painting a sombre-hued picture of country life. Any calling, the law, the ministry, the medical profession, can be blasted by fixing one's eyes only upon its ugliest aspects. And farming, at its best, has become a highly scientific, extraordinarily absorbing, and, when all is said, a profitable profession. Neighbours of mine have developed systems of overhead irrigation to make rain when there is no rain, and have covered whole fields with cloth canopies to increase the warmth and to protect the crops from wind and hail, and, by the analysis of the soil and exact methods of feeding it with fertilizers, have come as near a complete command of nature as any farmers in the world. What independent, resourceful men they are! And many of them have also grown rich in money. It is not what nature does with a man that matters but what he does with nature.

Nor is it necessary in these days for the farmer or the country-dweller to be uncultivated or uninterested in what are often called, with no very clear definition, the "finer things of life." Many educated men are now on the farms and have their books and magazines, and their music and lectures and dramas not too far off in the towns. A great change in this respect has come over American country life in twenty years. The real hardships of pioneering have passed away, and with good roads and machinery, and telephones, and newspapers every day by rural post, the farmer may maintain as close a touch with the best things the world has to offer to any man. And if he really have such broader interests the winter furnishes him time and leisure that no other class of people can command.

I do not know, truly, what we are here for upon this wonderful and beautiful earth, this incalculably interesting earth, unless it is to crowd into a few short years—when all is said, terribly short years!—every possible fine experience and adventure: unless it is to live our lives to the uttermost: unless it is to seize upon every fresh impression, develop every latent capacity: to grow as much as ever we have it in our power to grow. What else can there be? If there is no life beyond this one, we have lived *here* to the uttermost. We've had what we've had! But if there is more life, and still more life, beyond this one, and above

and under this one, and around and through this one, we shall be well prepared for that, whatever it may be.

The real advantages of country life have come to be a strong lure to many people in towns and cities: but no one should attempt to "go back to the land" with the idea that it is an easy way to escape the real problems and difficulties of life. The fact is, there is no escape. The problems and the difficulties must be boldly met whether in city or country. Farming in these days is not "easy living," but a highly skilled profession, requiring much knowledge, and actual manual labour and plenty of it. So many come to the country too light-heartedly, buy too much land, attempt unfamiliar crops, expect to hire the work done —and soon find themselves facing discouragement and failure. Any city man who would venture on this new way of life should try it first for a year or so before he commits himself—try himself out against the actual problems. Or, by moving to the country, still within reach of his accustomed work, he can have a garden or even small farm to experiment with. The shorter work-day has made this possible for a multitude of wage-workers, and I know many instances in which life because of this opportunity to get to the soil has become a very different and much finer thing for them.

A man who thus faces the problem squarely will soon see whether country life is the thing for him: if he finds it truly so, he can be as nearly assured of "living happily ever after" as anyone outside of a story-book can ever be. Out of it all are likely to come some of the greatest rewards that men can know, a robust body, a healthy appetite, a serene and cheerful spirit!

And finally there is one advantage not so easy to express. Long ago I read a story of Tolstoi's called *The Candle*—how a peasant Russian forced to plough on Easter Day lighted a candle to his Lord and kept it burning on his plough as he worked through the sacred day. When I see a man ploughing in his fields I often think of Tolstoi's peasant, and wonder if this is not as true a way as any of worshipping God. I wonder if anyone truly worships God who sets about it with deliberation, or knows quite why he does it.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass."

* * *

DALLAS LORE SHARP

Dallas Lore Sharp was born in New Jersey in 1870. After a course at Brown University followed by some years at Boston, he entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He became Professor of English at Boston University in 1909. His published work

includes *Wild Life Near Home*, *A Watcher in the Woods*, *Roof and Meadow*, *The Face of the Fields*, *Patrons of Democracy*, and *The Spirit of the Hive*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Sanctuary! Sanctuary!* by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

A COMEDIAN FROM THE WILD

THE March flood was over. The runaway water had crept back into the narrow river-bed, and the wood-choppers were now returned to the timber in order to finish their work. Only a few old trees remained to be felled. Among them, the largest, and perhaps the oldest tree in the timber, was a hollow sycamore that stood high above the banks of the flooded Sangamon, in eastern Illinois. This was a coon tree. And an old mother coon with a family of six new-born babes was asleep inside at the first fall of the axe.

But she was startled instantly wide-awake. What was it—that tremor? She had never felt a shiver like that before. Then she curled down and cuddled close about the babes. Had she not herself been born in this very tree? It had been a coon tree for generations. Nothing could harm her family here. Yet there it was again—and regularly now, as blow after blow, in ominous succession, sent the dreadful shiver thrilling through the leaning walls and out to every stubby twig high in the air.

This was not the wind. The old coon had weathered many a winter storm in this snug harbour. High in her lofty cabin she had heard the creak of the planking, the twisting and straining of her ship as it rode out the gale. But this was different, as when a ship grounds upon a reef, shuddering from stem to stern.

She saw the light of day in the open doorway overhead. She could escape along the extending limbs. A wild dash—but the babes sleeping in her fur! Then, suddenly, the very universe seemed to stand a moment in breathless terror—poised an instant, stricken, dazed, and undone—when, a mad shriek of winds, a stunning crash, and—all was dust and darkness in the splintered house where a little blind coon was whimpering.

I have dropped into story here in order to vivify the passage of this one wild creature from the timber into human hands. It is a picture of the violence altogether common in our relations with nature. It is a background, also, for a great forgetting and a great accepting on the part of this wild creature after its adoption into a human home.

Wild animals in captivity often change their faces, assuming masks behind which the real creature hides. On the other hand, so-called captivity is often a larger liberty than the wilds allowed, wherein the

animal may drop a mask, because it has dropped its wild fears and may behave with a spontaneity and an abandon more revealing of its inner nature than it is ever caught showing in the wilds, or perhaps ever dares to show. It was so with this coon from the sycamore, along the Sangamon in Illinois, and with many another animal I have known.

Nothing is more amazing in the mind of wild life than the quickness with which the most suspicious animal forgets his fears and falls in with human ways. I have seen a tame coyote, and I know nothing more wretchedly abject with fear than a coyote. The miserable creature will shake in an ague of fear at your approach to its cage, though a thousand have passed before you and lifted no hand to harm. But even this sneaking, slinking incarnation of craft and fear has a period of innocency, and if taken young enough, grows up with confidence in man. It is in this frame that some of our wild animals are best studied, for it is in these unmindful moods that the natural creature is most revealing.

The cause of this forgetting of fears and wraths is nothing but the touch of love. In the Field Museum of Chicago are two mounted man-eating lions with a known record for killings unspeakably terrible. As we stand close to the awful muzzles, heavy with underslung jaws, and look into the forward-thrust faces, we sicken at the craft, the strength, the feel of the hot breath upon their victims, and turn away in horror at the thought of the early struggle of human with brute in the bare fight to survive.

The human has won by superior craft over claw and fang, and not only holds dominion, but relentlessly presses forward towards the extinction of his unequal foes, still possessed of his primal fears, still ruled by his ancient wraths, as if he had not discovered that the force which rules all flesh and holds dominion over all worlds is love.

We have not dared to try it on the lion, nor on our neighbour, either. I have seen it work with dogs and horses and bears, and here with this coon from the Sangamon, with the birds in Santa Barbara, and with many a wild thing in Boston.

> He *ruleth* best who loveth best
> All things both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all,

the poet might have written.

When the great sycamore along the Sangamon fell, the choppers, hearing a tiny whimpering inside, split the trunk open and found the dead mother coon and the six little ones. All of these were alive, but only one of them survived the shock. This one was not hurt, and took to cow's milk readily, and was soon holding the bottle himself, for all the world like my little two-year-old nephew.

Let that boy spy his mother coming with the bottle, and over he flops on the floor, right where he is, and, flat on his back, goes at it, legs sprawled out, fists on the bottle, eyes roving the whole room, missing nothing of all the many things they see.

This little boy's eyes are blue, but the coon's eyes were inscrutably black—with mystery and with tragedy; while all the rest of him seemed pure comedy. He was a big sham, a bluffer, a make-believe. He swaggered about, a chip on his shoulder, hat on the side of his head, coat collar turned up, college-man style, looking for a real man's-size job, but finding mostly trouble. A ladybird, a spool of sewing silk were about his measure.

He had a man's-size growl, though. Indeed, he growled like a bear, like the little bear and the middle-sized bear and the big bear in one great growl! All this was cant and pretence, too. Yet he was no coward. Nothing in the timber, for his size, fights with the skill and courage of the coon. Quick, determined, powerful, and armed with ugly teeth, the coon is a dangerous foe for a dog of twice his weight.

It was his false growl and swashbuckler way which brought the coon of this story to an untimely end. He developed a peculiar fondness for running his fingers through your hair. And all the while he combed, working his forepaws like a shampooing barber with your tousled head, he growled. And he would crouch, and growl, and rush at you, when he came to shampoo, as if he intended to scalp you, falling gently into your hair and closing his eyes as your locks streamed through his funny black paws, the deep growl as sure a sign of comfort and contentment as is the quiet purring of a cat before the fire.

One day he wandered across the fields to the cabin of a neighbour who, tradition said, had never in all his life been washed or combed. The old man was asleep on his stoop, his long hair and bushy whiskers the chance of a lifetime for the coon. And *Lotor*, "the washer," for that is the coon's name, was not waiting for an invitation. Yet he must go through certain motions—crouching, scratching with his nails, growling, and the big rush—landing with all-fours in the middle of Old Lige's Nazarite nest. You can guess what happened. Old Lige, the heretofore uncombed, hearing the growling in his sleep, dreamed a catamount was after him, and when the coon landed in his hair leaped to his feet, and, snatching a chair on the stoop, struck the "varmint" dead. The Lodge boys, whose pet the coon was, wished many a time that their coon had been a catamount. Old Lige deserved to lose a few of his whiskers.

The most interesting trait to come to light in the human freedom allowed this particular coon was his love of music. No one can watch the movements of a coon, especially as he walks, without noting his swaying, rhythmic gait. It is as if he moved to music. But the coon

of the Sangamon seemed to be gifted, a kind of musical genius. He was music from his black plantigrade foot-soles on into the depths of his other soul, if a mere coon has that other soul—as he certainly deserves to have. His walk was rhythm. He did all things to the time of some inner harmony.

The coon had pretty much the run of the house, and when anyone started to play the piano he would come to the door and look in. Allowed to enter, he would respond to the music, if slow and stately, by gravely turning somersaults from the door in a complete circle around the room. No one had taught him to do this. It was his invention, a curious trick of his own, his dance, his cake-walk, which, I suspect, may be something of a custom among his people, could we listen by wireless, and watch by wireless, the secret doings of the wild timber folk, whose lives, more than we yet understand, may move to the music of the spheres.

If the air was lively, the coon would quicken his footing to keep time, turning his somersaults and interspersing them with a kind of Lord Dundreary hop-and-skip—a coon-trot, which was probably the original fox-trot, the human dancers getting their animals mixed. Once around the room, the coon was done and ready to leave the house. He would never respond to an encore.

Later in the summer of that first year of the coon's life, the boys of the household built an outdoor dance floor. The platform was erected in the yard under a large, spreading maple, which was one of the coon's favourite quarters.

On the evening of the first neighbourhood dance, the coon was discovered overhead, fast asleep in the crotch of the big maple-tree. The young people woke him up, but they could not induce him to come down. The music started. The turning couples began to pour around the platform beneath the now watching coon. Round and round wove the mazy figures to the swinging, swaying rhythm of the waltz, as on and on flowed the bewitching measures of the violins to the tune of

> Treat my daughter kindly,
> And say you'll do no harm;
> And when I die I'll will to you
> My little stock and farm,

the coon overhead slowly coming from his crotch, his paws spread against the bark of the tree, as if invisible forces were hauling at him.

The orchestra stopped amid the clapping of hands, laughter, and dissolving couples, when into the cleared middle of the stage dropped the coon. The musicians were quick with their cue. Catching the very tail of their last tune they swung on

> With all the little chickens in the garden

as the coon, now given the whole stage, took a few fancy steps by way of a flourish, put down his head between his forepaws, and did the aboriginal somersault, over and over, somersault after somersault, around the boards, prancing now a few steps for variation, now with his ringed tail giving a touch of fine fandango, only to stand on his head again, and continue to tumble once all the way around. Then, the music still searching his soul, he marched solemnly off the platform and disappeared into the night.

Nor did he return that night. But the next night when the dance was on, on came the coon for his lone performance, without invitation or partner, for no amount of urging ever prevailed upon him to appear. Just once around, and he would melt away into the moonlight or vanish into the dark.

Deep down in his wild heart was the instinct for play, deep down in all wild hearts, as it lies in all human hearts. What else can the perfect and abounding life of wild animals mean? In the "timber" along the Sangamon in Piatt County that instinct for expression had been repressed since long before the sycamore and the walnut and the redbud were saplings there. But growing up in a human household, free from all natural enemies and restraints, the wild coon forgot that he must wear his finger on his lips, and so gave himself to fun and mischief with all the abandon that human children and puppies and kittens do.

* * *

DON MARQUIS

DON MARQUIS was born at Walnut, Illinois, in 1878. He has achieved fame by the column known as "The Sun Dial" which for years he has conducted in the New York *Sun*. Before joining the *Sun* in 1912 Mr. Marquis did newspaper work in Philadelphia and Alabama. His published works include *Dreams and Dust*, *The Cruise of the Jasper B.*, *Prefaces*, *The Old Soak*, and *Poems and Portraits*.

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THE ALMOST PERFECT STATE

I

NO MATTER how nearly perfect an Almost Perfect State may be, it is not nearly enough perfect unless the individuals who compose it can, somewhere between death and birth, have a perfectly corking time for a few years. The most wonderful governmental

system in the world does not attract us, as a system; we are after a system that scarcely knows it is a system; the great thing is to have the largest number of individuals as happy as may be, for a little while at least, some time before they die.

Infancy is not what it is cracked up to be. The child seems happy all the time to the adult, because the adult knows that the child is untouched by the real problems of life; if the adult were similarly untouched he is sure that he would be happy. But children, not knowing that they are having an easy time, have a good many hard times. Growing and learning and obeying the rules of their elders, or fighting against them, are not easy things to do. Adolescence is certainly far from a uniformly pleasant period. Early manhood might be the most glorious time of all were it not that the sheer excess of life and vigour gets a fellow into continual scrapes. Of middle age the best that can be said is that a middle-aged person has likely learned how to have a little fun in spite of his troubles.

It is to old age that we look for reimbursement, the most of us. And most of us look in vain. For the most of us have been wrenched and racked, in one way or another, until old age is the most trying time of all.

In the Almost Perfect State every person shall have at least ten years before he dies of easy, carefree, happy living . . . things will be so arranged economically that this will be possible for each individual.

Personally we look forward to an old age of dissipation and indolence and unreverend disrepute. In fifty years we shall be ninety-two years old. We intend to work rather hard during those fifty years and accumulate enough to live on without working any more for the next ten years, for we have determined to die at the age of one hundred and two.

During the last ten years we shall indulge ourself in many things that we have been forced by circumstances to forego. We have always been compelled, and we shall be compelled for many years to come, to be prudent, cautious, staid, sober, conservative, industrious, respectful of established institutions, a model citizen. We have not liked it, but we have been unable to escape it. Our mind, our logical faculties, our observation, inform us that the conservatives have the right side of the argument in all human affairs. But the people whom we really prefer as associates, though we do not approve their ideas, are the rebels, the radicals, the wastrels, the vicious, the poets, the Bolshevists, the idealists, the nuts, the Lucifers, the agreeable good-for-nothings, the sentimentalists, the prophets, the freaks. We have never dared to know any of them, far less become intimate with them.

Between the years of ninety-two and a hundred and two, however, we shall be the ribald, useless, drunken outcast person we have always

wished to be. We shall have a long white beard and long white hair; we shall not walk at all, but recline in a wheel chair and bellow for alcoholic beverages; in the winter we shall sit before the fire with our feet in a bucket of hot water, with a decanter of corn whisky near at hand, and write ribald songs against organized society; strapped to one arm of our chair will be a forty-five calibre revolver, and we shall shoot out the lights when we want to go to sleep, instead of turning them off; when we want air we shall throw a silver candlestick through the front window and be damned to it; we shall address public meetings to which we have been invited because of our wisdom in a vein of jocund malice. We shall . . . but we don't wish to make anyone envious of the good time that is coming to us . . . we look forward to a disreputable, vigorous, unhonoured, and disorderly old age.

(In the meantime, of course, you understand, you can't have us pinched and deported for our yearnings.)

We shall know that the Almost Perfect State is here when the kind of old age each person wants is possible to him. Of course, all of you may not want the kind we want . . . some of you may prefer prunes and morality to the bitter end. Some of you may be dissolute now and may look forward to becoming like one of the nice old fellows in a Wordsworth poem. But for our part we have always been a hypocrite and we shall have to continue being a hypocrite for a good many years yet, and we yearn to come out in our true colours at last. The point is, that no matter what you want to be, during those last ten years, that you may be, in the Almost Perfect State.

Any system of government under which the individual does all the sacrificing for the sake of the general good, for the sake of the community, the State, gets off on its wrong foot. We don't want things that cost us too much. We don't want too much strain all the time.

The best good that you can possibly achieve is not good enough if you have to strain yourself all the time to reach it. A thing is only worth doing, and doing again and again, if you can do it rather easily, and get some joy out of it.

Do the best you can, without straining yourself too much and too continuously, and leave the rest to God. If you strain yourself too much you'll have to ask God to patch you up. And for all you know, patching you up may take time that it was planned to use some other way.

BUT . . . overstrain yourself *now and then.* For this reason: The things you create easily and joyously will not continue to come easily and joyously unless you yourself are getting bigger all the time. And when you overstrain yourself you are assisting in the creation of a new self—if you get what we mean. And if you should ask us suddenly just what this has to do with the picture of the old guy in the wheel

chair we should answer: Hanged if we know, but we seemed to sort o' run into it, somehow.

II

Interplanetary communications is one of the persistent dreams of the inhabitants of this oblate spheroid on which we move, breathe, and suffer for lack of beer. There seems to be a feeling in many quarters that if we could get speech with the Martians, let us say, we might learn from them something to our advantage. There is a disposition to concede the superiority of the fellows Out There . . . just as some Americans capitulate without a struggle to poets from England, rugs from Constantinople, song and sausage from Germany, religious enthusiasts from Hindustan, and cheese from Switzerland, although they have not tested the goods offered and really lack the discrimination to determine their quality. Almost the only foreign importations that were ever sneezed at in this country were Swedish matches and Spanish influenza.

But are the Martians . . . if Martians there be . . . any more capable than the persons dwelling between the Woolworth Building and the Golden Horn, between Shwe Dagon and the First Church, Scientist, in Boston, Mass.? Perhaps the Martians yearn toward earth, romantically, poetically, the Romeos swearing by its light to the Juliets; the idealists and philosophers fabling that already there exists upon it an ALMOST PERFECT STATE—and now and then a wan prophet lifting his heart to its gleams, as a cup to be filled from Heaven with fresh waters of hope and courage. For this earth, it is also a star.

We know they are wrong about us, the lovers in the far stars, the philosophers, poets, the prophets . . . or *are* they wrong?

They are both right and wrong, as we are probably both right and wrong about them. If we tumbled into Mars or Arcturus or Sirius this evening we should find the people there discussing the shimmy, the jazz, the inconstancy of cooks, and the iniquity of retail butchers, no doubt . . . and they would be equally disappointed by the way we flitter, frivol, flutter, and flivver.

And yet, that other thing would be there too . . . that thing that made them look at our star as a symbol of grace and beauty.

Men could not think of THE ALMOST PERFECT STATE if they did not have it in them ultimately to create THE ALMOST PERFECT STATE.

We used sometimes to walk over the Brooklyn Bridge, that song in stone and steel of an engineer who was also a great artist, at dusk, when the tides of shadow flood in from the lower bay to break in a surf of glory and mystery and illusion against the tall towers of Manhattan. Seen from the middle arch of the bridge at twilight, New York,

with its girdle of shifting waters and its drift of purple cloud and its quick pulsations of unstable light is a miracle of splendour and beauty that lights up the heart like the laughter of a god.

But, descend. Go down into the city. Mingle with the details. The dirty old shed from which the "L" trains and trolleys put out with their jammed and mangled thousands for flattest Flatbush and the unknown bourne of ulterior Brooklyn is still the same dirty old shed; on a hot, damp night the pasty streets stink like a paperhanger's overalls; you are trodden and over-ridden by greasy little profiteers and their hopping victims; you are encompassed round about by the ugly and the sordid, and the objectionable is exuded upon you from a myriad candid pores; your elation and your illusion vanish like ingenuous snowflakes that have kissed a hot dog sandwich on its fiery brow, and you say: "Beauty? Aw, h——l! What's the use?"

And yet you *have* seen beauty. And beauty that was created by these people and people like these. . . . You have seen the tall towers of Manhattan, wonderful under the stars. How did it come about that such growths came from such soil—that a breed lawless and sordid and prosaic has written such a mighty hieroglyphic against the sky? This glamour out of a pigsty . . . how come? How is it that this hideous, half-brute city is also beautiful and a fit habitation for demi-gods? How come?

It comes about because the wise and subtle deities permit nothing worthy to be lost. It was with no thought of beauty that the builders laboured; no conscious thought; they were masters or slaves in the bitter wars of commerce, and they never saw as a whole what they were making; no one of them did. But each one had had his dream. And the baffled dreams and the broken visions and the ruined hopes and the secret desires of each one laboured with him as he laboured; the things that were lost and beaten and trampled down went into the stone and steel and gave it soul; the aspiration denied and the hope abandoned and the vision defeated were the things that lived, and not the apparent purpose for which each one of all the millions sweat and toiled or cheated; the hidden things, the silent things, the winged things, so weak they are easily killed, the unacknowledged things, the rejected beauty, the strangled appreciation, the inchoate art, the submerged spirit—these groped and found each other and gathered themselves together and worked themselves into the tiles and mortar of the edifice and made a town that is a worthy fellow of the sunrise and the sea winds.

Humanity triumphs over its details.

The individual aspiration is always defeated of its perfect fruition and expression, but it is never lost; it passes into the conglomerate being of the race.

The way to encourage yourself about the human race is to look at

it first from a distance; look at the lights on the high spots. Coming closer, you will be profoundly discouraged at the number of low spots, not to say two-spots. Coming still closer, you will become discouraged once more by the reflection that the same stuff that is in the high spots is also in the two-spots.

* * *

KATHARINE FULLERTON GEROULD

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WHAT, THEN, IS CULTURE?

I

"'WHAT is truth?' said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer."

"What is culture?" said an enlightened man to me not long since; and though he stayed for an answer, he did not get it. He would have none of Matthew Arnold's definition, on which, for a few decades, our world pillowed itself comfortably. "Contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world," he insisted, was not the whole story. Together, we eliminated requirements, which is much easier than setting them up; we became empirical and voted on certain well-known critics and humanists; in the end, we left culture an uncracked nut. I, at my leisure, was supposed to crack it as best I could.

The introduction is meant to be deprecatory, for the writer is no more able to determine with assurance what culture is than she was a few weeks ago. The little necessary impulse to cogitation, to be sure, was given by my interlocutor's refusal to accept Matthew Arnold's opinion. When, some years since, I had ventured, at the request of an editor, some remarks on this subject, I had more or less assumed that Arnold was right. Here was a quite different editor requesting me to venture more remarks, on the assumption that Arnold was wrong—or, at the least, insufficient.

Perhaps the sole compensation for growing middle-aged—certainly I know of no other—is that after one has passed forty one ceases to accept authority. I am in full agreement with the anonymous critic

who maintains that youth is hidebound and that intellectual freedom comes only with being grown-up. We do not rid ourselves at forty of convictions, devotions, obsessions; but we do select the objects of our reverence, our partisanships do result from personal taste. Our opinions derive from our temperaments, the profounder qualities of our being. We do not care whether we agree with X or not; we decide for ourselves. At least, we are capable of this. Youth is intellectually more unselfish, idealistic, courageous, than middle age; but middle age is intellectually more independent. At twenty-five one accepts Arnold, if at all, because he is Matthew Arnold and a warlock among critics; at forty, if one accepts him, it is because he has the honour to agree with us, and neither his urbanity nor his irony can mesmerize us against our will.

The great fault of Arnold's definition of culture—contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world—is that it disposes, ruthlessly and finally, of every one who does not, for example, know Greek. Leaving to one side, as one reasonably may, civilizations such as those of China or India, from which our own world in no immediate sense derives, I still do not see how one who follows Arnold can get away from the necessity of knowing the classics. By the best that has been said and thought in the world Arnold means the best in European civilization, in historic times. He might let you off the Minoan remains, but he would never let you off Homer, Plato, Virgil, and Marcus Aurelius. He would not let you off Dante, Goethe, Milton. I doubt if he would permit you to substitute Confucius or Averroës, or even the Vedic poets, since these are not, in the same sense, our intellectual ancestors.

Now if culture means contact with the classical poets and dramatists and philosophers, it demands initially a classical education. You cannot evade the requirement by reading all these people in translation. Some of them, perhaps, but not all. The disciples of Arnold would, I think rightly, suspect the culture of the man who could read Homer, Virgil, Dante, Cervantes, Racine, Goethe only in English versions. The point is purely an academic one, in any case, for there must be very few people who have taken the trouble to read translations of all the European classics. It is only the hero of certain sentimental novels who, having no language but English, spends his midnights in exhaustive perusal of Bohn editions. "Is he cultured?" is a merely rhetorical question, since there is no such animal. No: the linguistic demand is clear. You virtually cannot be cultured according to Arnold without a fair classical education. Theoretically, it may be possible; practically, it is not.

That formal education does not suffice, Arnold would probably have been one of the first to agree. The English aristocracy of Arnold's day had read Greek and Latin if it had read nothing else; they were none

the less "barbarians" to him. To some contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world they had been forced, at public school and university. It is clear, one would suppose, that a forced, or a reluctant, or a careless contact will not do the trick. In order to work, it must be a contact enjoyed, appreciated; electric, not merely physical. It is no doubt possible to read Homer in Greek and yet be a person to whom Homer says nothing. To be educated you must have a certain amount of knowledge—not spurious but real; not the kind that can be got from Sunday supplements, or five-foot shelves, or university extension lectures. You must, perhaps, have a trained mind. The object of academic education as it is now conducted at the best universities is to teach the young man to distinguish between the truth and a lie. His mind is exercised in one field of knowledge, that he may learn methods and standards. By dealing correctly with one mass of facts, he learns (this, at least, is the theory) how to deal with any mass of facts to which duty or desire may later introduce him. Sciolism is not required of him, but the correct approach to the unknown is.

II

Yet even this is not culture. No one who has had long experience of academic communities can have failed to note that culture is far less common in college faculties than one would expect. The pedant is apt to be farther from it than the man of natural good taste whose formal education has been scanty. Even the scholar—whom I would contrast with the pedant—is not invariably a cultured man. Even to him, contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world has not always sufficed. Learning is not culture, though it is a mighty aid thereto. I have known many people lacking any college experience who were more cultured than many others well dowered with doctorates. Specialization is the persistent foe of culture. Even a humanist sometimes concentrates too much on "settling *Hoti's* business," and, while still living, is "famous, calm, and dead." Also, they who constitute criticism are too apt to take critics seriously. There is over-much tendency among the highly educated to accept the dicta of other highly educated folk; too much tendency for a man who himself has a Ph.D. in classics or economics to think that opinions are most trustworthy when they emanate from other people who have Ph.D.'s in classics or economics; to believe that the man who is right about *Hoti* or free trade will be right about a novel, a play, a picture, a prize fight, or a human being. This academic snobbishness defeats the purposes of culture; for culture implies a varied taste, a vital interest, and a complete independence. The person who always knows the correct opinion and who always voices it is never a truly cultured person: he is only the parasite of experts.

Culture, then, is not conterminous with education. It presupposes, above all things, an attitude of mind. One cannot be born cultured, for culture implies a process endured, an experience undergone; but one can be born either more, or less, susceptible of culture. Henry James stated somewhere the necessity for the aspirant writer of being "a young person on whom nothing is lost." That is, surely, the first duty of the man or woman who would be cultured. If the word "culture" fell into disrepute for a time, it was because the pedants and the parasites were the people who claimed culture for their own. Contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world does not absolutely suffice, as we have said; since there are those whom that contact does not fire, mould, alter. There are, besides, people whose contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world has been, owing to restrictions of circumstance, fairly scanty, yet who are recognizable, to the impartial judge, as cultured beings. One of the people who rises most quickly to the surface of my mind, as I drop the word "culture" in to see what happens, is a woman with small Latin and less Greek—I suspect, indeed, neither, in any measure—who has never travelled abroad or widely in her own country, who has been cut off by straitened circumstances, ill-health, and small-town life from most of the recognized agents of culture. Her garden is very small, but she has cultivated it intensively, tirelessly, and with delight. If to be cultured is to have a natural instinct for fineness in whatever intellectual field or plastic form, to have pursued fineness as constantly and as variously as circumstances allow, never to be seduced by the mere prevailing fashion, and to find continual, unsatiated delight in fineness of quality, wherever it appears—and I can think of no definition that approximates the meaning of culture more nearly—then this friend is one of the most cultured people I have known. The individual of timid, or inhospitable, or intolerant taste is never cultured, though he should have heard the great music, read the great books, seen the great landscapes and the great pictures. Some of the most experienced and fortunate people I know, whose eyes and ears and minds have been fed full with the great masterpieces of God and man, are not cultured and never could have been. Like vaccine, truth and beauty do not always "take."

Slavishness is the greatest deterrent, perhaps, to the development of oneself as a cultured being. As one thinks back, one realizes that half the "cultured" people one has known are not truly so, since they are incapable of deciding aesthetically or intellectually for themselves. They are like compasses flung out of true by any contiguous piece of iron. Criticism in any field is educative and helpful, but one must not be Polonius agreeing with Hamlet, whether Hamlet is Pater or Berenson or Bernard Shaw or George Jean Nathan. Too many people let some expert fix their fluctuating judgments; and the judgment must be fixed

from within. No: this is not a brief for ignorance or for arrogance; a brief, rather, for intelligent impressionability, for a spontaneous, not a forced, reaction to stimuli. The cultured person does not get his impressions second-hand; he does not, while registering an impression, try to square it with the impression of his preferred critic.

Why, then, some one might ask, is not every cocky person, who cares nothing for outside opinion, cultured? Are they cultured, all the brash and ignorant creatures who despise every hint of their elders and betters? What becomes of the famous retort to the man who said (and still says) "I know what I like"? (The retort, I believe, was, "So do the beasts of the field.") Does culture, then, consist in vociferously defending the comic strip, or the Irving Berlin song, or the Mack Sennett comedy just because one is too ignorant to be aware that there are better things? There are millions of people who do not even know that there are critics who can be disagreed with. Quite so; though in the last analysis, the cultured man is like the beasts of the field in "knowing what he likes." These millions are cut out of the controversy before it begins. Even the man with a natural flair for fineness—which is a prerequisite to culture—is not cultured if he has seen, heard, experienced no fineness. He is an untempered instrument. There would be no point in proving that the majority of mankind is uncultured. Every one knows that. In distinguishing between the cultured and the uncultured, we must deal with the people about whom there can be a question. If you were trying to determine the presence or absence of a Celtic strain in certain West-European groups, you would not waste your time in examining Asiatics. I have been referring to a large percentage of those people whom the world agrees to call cultured; people who are not really cultured because their taste has been so lessoned and tutored and coerced that in the end they have no taste of their own at all. However they may attempt to conceal the fact by indulging in safe little fads of their own, they are Tomlinsons: they got it from a Belgian book on the word of a dead French lord. The pseudo-cultured are pleasanter folk than the non-cultured, yet their servility, though it has a neater vocabulary, is the very servility of the Chautauqua.

III

Next to slavishness, perhaps, among the sins against true culture is narrowness. A cup can be no more than full, and to few is it given to be divinely aware in many fields of art or thought. As in academic education, so in culture, the educative experience has often to be gathered in one or two fields. We cannot know all arts equally well. Yet I wonder if that man is truly cultured whose sense of fineness can be exercised only on very limited and familiar phenomena. The gift and habit (for both are necessary) of perceiving fineness must not be too

narrowly channelled. Almost every purposeful activity has its own excellence, and there is something, even for culture, in being "an all-round man." The "cultured" tend too much to look for, to expect, to credit beauty or perfection only in certain accustomed places. The truly cultured person apprehends beauty in a form in which he has never before seen it. I remember being accused by a friend, in my youth, of being "narrow-tasted." Nearly all the cultured people I know—I cannot claim culture for myself—are far too narrow-tasted. We cannot, ourselves, be equally sensitive in all directions, or summon delight whenever we are told. We might, however, more than we do, confess to, admit beauty that is not our special business. I think we must not "high-hat" perfection, wherever it may be found. The man who gets his keenest pleasure out of *Paradise Lost* or a Beethoven symphony will probably not greatly enjoy a prize fight. "Better a third-rate cathedral than the noblest work of God," an aesthetic friend of mine once retorted to my youthful praise of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. She was a cultured person who cared very little for what is called "scenery."

These preferences are natural, and so long as they are honest, no one need mind. Yet when it comes to denying other people's preferences, true culture will walk warily. It is as unenlightened to say that there is no beauty in Dempsey's boxing, or in the cowboy's bronco-busting as to say that there is none in the Velasquez Venus or in a certain César Franck symphony. Why wall oneself completely in, though it should be inside a Salon Carré? I know many cultured folk who declare that they can get no pleasure from motion pictures. In many cases the plea is honest, and arises from the fact that they have never seen enough movies to adjust themselves to the medium. They probably do get headaches, *plus* a sense of unreality. The remedy is to accustom oneself to the genre. There are, however, a great many individuals who can be seen to preen themselves while they express their dislike. I am afraid they think they are being "cultured." I myself have found more beauty, in the last half dozen years, in motion pictures than in any other form or art except the great field of English prose. Those years, to be sure, have not been adventurous, or explicitly oriented towards the arts. One has no reproaches for the people who get headaches at movies: one can only be sorry for them. One has, indeed, no reproach for the people who honestly do not enjoy them. One's only reproach is for the people who have pre-judged them, and relentlessly stay away because they suspect that to enjoy a movie is vulgar.

Is all this to widen the boundaries of culture too much: to make a vast public park of a necessarily limited preserve? I think not. For it must be obvious to every one that the cultured, until Utopia is realized,

will always be a small minority. True culture will never find its joys "in widest commonalty spread," though true culture will never discredit an appeal because it happens to be well-nigh universal. An acquaintance told me recently of standing on the brink of the Grand Canyon and of a man next her remarking that "it was very common." "You mean 'uncommon'?" she asked, thinking she had misunderstood. "No, I mean 'common'; there's so much of it," was his reply. The gentleman, without doubt, had inklings of "culture." It is possible that he would have had no trouble at all with Mona Lisa. However absurd his application, he was endeavouring to state the principle that mass-production destroys beauty. The principle itself is fairly sound, though the really cultured person, I think, will permit even mass-production to God Almighty. Mass-appreciation is another matter. We may as well admit that the cultured man gets a large number of his keenest joys from objects and experiences that would leave the great majority uncertain or cold. One of the surest tests of his culture, however, is to find out what popularities he rejects, and why. The finer the temperament, the more complex and subtle the delight; but it is very dangerous to condemn a spectacle merely because millions get pleasure out of it. You cannot blacklist *Hamlet* because it has always got across to the groundlings. You cannot declare that moonlight is overrated (I have a delightful friend who once did) just because Tin Pan Alley has made sentimental capital of it. Yes, I have heard the moon put out of court and called cheap. Which is a kind of transferred epithet—confusing the attributes of Hecate with those of her lesser devotees. One must hold one's judgment truer than that. One must even admit that there are beauties, tragedies, delights by which the common, average heart can be pierced—and which are, themselves, none the less authentic. It is not strange that cultured individuals, seeing the majority go wrong so often, should instinctively beware of what the majority likes. Have not most of us stayed away purposely from *Abie's Irish Rose*? I confess that I have always stayed away purposely from the Yosemite, for much the same reason. But if one carries this distrust too far, one will some day miss a great experience.

IV

It all sounds, no doubt, like an impossible counsel of perfection. Well, it is; and it should be. It is more important to have a decent conception of culture than to give away the label generously, with both hands; less painful to admit that oneself and a lot of one's friends are not truly cultured than to accept the debasing definitions of those who call themselves "cultured" without warrant. The cultured need

not, after all, be numerically few. Opportunity is very wide, and in a country where one out of every eight people can possess a motor car, surely one out of every ten thousand might be cultured if he would. The greatest foes of culture are inside, not outside. By their own affectations and insincerities and snobberies they bring it into not undeserved disrepute. They have made Culture appear to be a power in whose service people could grow dry, intolerant, and precious. They have made it depend wholly on the content, not at all on the quality and attitude, of the mind; and they have tended to prescribe that content too rigorously. They have herded too stupidly, given themselves over to fantastic shepherds, followed bell-wethers that other generations will forget. Only those are truly cultured who have dared to be lonely.

Is contact with the best that has been said and thought in the world, then, unnecessary? I certainly should not venture to say so. But we have perhaps minimized the power of one aesthetic or intellectual intimacy to throw light on all others. It is possible, I fancy, for the rich encounter with one masterpiece to teach one the correct manner with masterpieces in general. I have known more than one person with a limited formal education who, by his natural susceptibility, say to music, or to architecture, by assiduous adventuring within the one field, has achieved for himself the cultured point of view. The history, development, and florescence of one art, well mastered, can give a man intuitions of the others. True, it may not do so; he may, for example, become a mere specialist. The truly cultured person must, I imagine, have sampled more than one kind of beauty, be aware, at least, of the vast variety of intellectual experience. He cannot be ignorant of civilization. If he has acquired a real and entire intimacy with one of the great genres, he can hardly have avoided some acquaintance with the main stream of human history. Can a man be cultured who has never heard of Plato? Probably not; since never to have heard of Plato is an almost impossible condition for anyone to fulfil who has documented himself in any intellectual field or aesthetic field. Can a man be cultured who has never read Plato? Assuredly.

True culture must be, it would seem, a matter of both mind and spirit. That there cannot be culture without some real knowledge goes without saying. Our mistake has been to think that knowledge is the whole story. Equally important are natural sensitiveness and intellectual independence—I had nearly said, the dreaming heart. Anatole France, I believe, defined his type of impressionistic criticism as "the adventures of a soul among the masterpieces." To be cultured one must first have a soul that is capable of adventures among masterpieces; then, a soul that has been given some opportunity for adventuring. But that soul must have its own adventures, not someone else's, or it is only a pseudo-culture; and it must keep a charity, an

eagerness that make it ever ready to seek beauty in unproclaimed places, and to respect ardours it cannot itself feel.

> The perfect judge could go face to face before God. . . .
> Before the perfect judge heaven and hell shall stand back.

Not to anyone—Petronius Arbiter or the Admirable Crichton or anyone else—is it possible to become the perfect judge. The truly cultured person does not confess anyone, dead or living, as the perfect judge, since even the finest temperament has its limitations both of capacity and experience. He will ever be gathering knowledge, accumulating experience, as he can; but if he once surrenders his independence or loses his divine curiosity, he has forsaken culture and become, according to his type, either a catalogue or a code—in either case, a hindrance and a bore.

* * *

H. L. MENCKEN

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THE LATE MR. WELLS

THE man as artist, I fear, is extinct—not by some sudden and romantic catastrophe, like his own Richard Remington, but after a process of gradual and obscure decay. In his day he was easily the most brilliant, if not always the most profound, of contemporary English novelists. There were in him all the requisites for the business and most of them very abundantly. He had a lively and charming imagination, he wrote with the utmost fluency and address, he had humour and eloquence, he had a sharp eye for the odd and intriguing in human character, and, most of all, he was full of feeling and could transmit it to the reader. That high day of his lasted, say, from 1908 to 1912. It began with *Tono-Bungay* and ended amid the last scenes of *Marriage,* as the well-made play of Scribe gave up the ghost

in the last act of *A Doll's House.* There, in *Marriage,* were the first faint signs of something wrong. Invention succumbed to theories that somehow failed to hang together, and the story, after vast heavings, incontinently went to pieces. One had begun with an acute and highly diverting study of monogamy in modern London; one found one's self, toward the close, gaping over an unconvincing fable of marriage in the Stone Age. Coming directly after so vivid a personage as Remington, Dr. Richard Godwin Trafford simply refused to go down. And his Marjorie, following his example, stuck in the gullet of the imagination. One ceased to believe in them when they set out for Labrador, and after that it was impossible to revive interest in them. The more they were explained and vivisected and drenched with theories, the more unreal they became.

Since then the decline of Wells has been as steady as his rise was rapid. Call the roll of his books, and you will discern a progressive and unmistakable falling off. Into *The Passionate Friends* there crept the first downright dullness. By this time his readers had become familiar with his machinery and his materials—his elbowing suffragettes, his tea-swilling London uplifters, his smattering of quasi-science, his intellectualized adulteries, his Thackerayan asides, his text-book paragraphs, his journalistic raciness—and all these things had thus begun to lose the blush of their first charm. To help them out he heaved in larger and larger doses of theory—often diverting enough, and sometimes even persuasive, but in the long run a poor substitute for the proper ingredients of character, situation, and human passion. Next came *The Wife of Sir Isaac Harman,* an attempt to rewrite *A Doll's House* (with a fourth act) in terms of ante-bellus 1914. The result was 500-odd pages of bosh, a flabby and tedious piece of work, Wells for the first time in the *rôle* of unmistakable bore. And then *Bealby,* with its Palais Royal jocosity, its running in and out of doors, its humour of physical collision, its reminiscences of *A Trip to Chinatown* and *Peck's Bad Boy.* And then *Boon,* a heavy-witted satire, often incomprehensible, always incommoded by its disguise as a novel. And then *The Research Magnificent:* a poor soup from the dry bones of Nietzsche. And then *Mr. Britling Sees It Through. . . .*

Here, for a happy moment, there seemed to be something better—almost, in fact, a recrudescence of the Wells of 1910. But that seeming was only seeming. What confused the judgment was the enormous popular success of the book. Because it presented a fifth-rate Englishman in an heroic aspect, because it sentimentalized the whole reaction of the English proletariat to the War, it offered a subtle sort of flattery to other fifth-rate Englishmen, and, *per corollary,* to Americans of corresponding degree, to wit, the second. Thus it made a great pother, and was hymned as a masterpiece in such gazettes as the New York *Times,* as Blasco Ibáñez's *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* was

destined to be hymned three years later. But there was in the book, in point of fact, a great hollowness, and that hollowness presently begat an implosion that disposed of the shell. I dare say many a novel-reader returns, now and then, to *Tono-Bungay,* and even to *Ann Veronica.* But surely only a reader with absolutely nothing else to read would return to *Mr. Britling Sees It Through.* There followed—what? *The Soul of a Bishop,* perhaps the worst novel ever written by a serious novelist since novel-writing began. And then—or perhaps a bit before, or simultaneously—an idiotic religious tract—a tract so utterly feeble and preposterous that even the Scotchman, William Archer, could not stomach it. And then, to make an end, came *Joan and Peter*—and the collapse of Wells was revealed at last in its true proportions.

This *Joan and Peter* I confess, lingers in my memory as unpleasantly as a summer cold, and so, in retrospect, I may perhaps exaggerate its intrinsic badness. I would not look into it again for gold and frankincense. I was at the job of reading it for days and days, endlessly daunted and halted by its laborious dullness, its flatulent fatuity, its almost fabulous inconsequentiality. It was, and is, nearly impossible to believe that the Wells of *Tono-Bungay* and *The History of Mr. Polly* wrote it, or that he was in the full possession of his faculties when he allowed it to be printed under his name. For in it there is the fault that the Wells of those days, almost beyond any other fictioneer of the time, was incapable of—the fault of dismalness, of tediousness—the witless and contagious coma of the evangelist. Here, for nearly six hundred pages of fine type, he rolls on in an intellectual cloud, boring one abominably with uninteresting people, pointless situations, revelations that reveal nothing, arguments that have no opposite-ness, expositions that expose naught save an insatiable and torturing garrulity. Where is the old fine address of the man? Where is his sharp eye for the salient and significant in character? Where is his instinct for form, his skill at putting a story together, his hand for making it unwind itself? These things are so far gone that it becomes hard to believe that they ever existed. There is not the slightest sign of them in *Joan and Peter.* The book is a botch from end to end, and in that botch there is not even the palliation of an arduous enterprise gallantly attempted. No inherent difficulty is visible. The story is anything but complex, and surely anything but subtle. Its badness lies wholly in the fact that the author made a mess of the writing, that his quondam cunning, once so exhilarating, was gone when he began it.

Reviewing it at the time of its publication, I inclined momentarily to the notion that the War was to blame. No one could overestimate the cost of that struggle to the English, not only in men and money, but also and more importantly in the things of the spirit. It developed national traits that were greatly at odds with the old ideal of Anglo-

Saxon character—an extravagant hysteria, a tendency to whimper under blows, political radicalism, and credulity. It overthrew the old ruling caste of the land and gave over the control of things to upstarts from the lowest classes—shady Jews, snuffling Methodists, prehensile commercial gents, disgusting demagogues, all sorts of self-seeking adventurers. Worst of all, the strain seemed to work havoc with the customary dignity and reticence, and even with the plain common sense of many Englishmen on a higher level, and in particular many English writers. The astounding bawling of Kipling and the no less astounding bombast of G. K. Chesterton were anything but isolated; there were, in fact, scores of other eminent authors in the same state of eruption, and a study of the resultant literature of objurgation will make a fascinating job for some sweating *Privadozent* of to-morrow, say out of Göttingen or Jena. It occurred to me, as I say, that Wells might have become afflicted by this same demoralization, but reflection disposed of the notion. On the one hand, there was the plain fact that his actual writings on the War, while marked by the bitterness of the time, were anything but insane, and on the other hand there was the equally plain fact that his decay had been in progress a long while before the Germans made their fateful thrust at Liége.

The precise thing that ailed him I found at last on page 272 *et seq.* of the American edition of his book. There it was plainly described, albeit unwittingly, but if you will go back to the other novels since *Marriage* you will find traces of it in all of them, and even more vivid indications in the books of exposition and philosophizing that have accompanied them. What has slowly crippled him and perhaps disposed of him is his gradual acceptance of the theory, corrupting to the artist and scarcely less so to the man, that he is one of the Great Thinkers of his era, charged with a pregnant Message to the Younger Generation—that his ideas, rammed into enough skulls, will Save the Empire, not only from the satanic Nietzscheism of the Hindenburgs and post-Hindenburgs, but also from all those inner Weaknesses that taint and flabbergast its vitals, as the tape-worm with nineteen heads devoured Atharippus of Macedon. In brief, he suffers from a messianic delusion—and once a man begins to suffer from a messianic delusion his days as a serious artist are ended. He may yet serve the state with laudable devotion; he may yet enchant his millions; he may yet posture and gyrate before the world as a man of mark. But not in the character of artist. Not as a creator of sound books. Not in the separate place of one who observes the eternal tragedy of man with full sympathy and understanding, and yet with a touch of god-like remoteness. Not as Homer saw it, smiting the while his blooming lyre.

I point, as I say, to page 272 of *Joan and Peter,* whereon, imperfectly concealed by jocosity, you will find Wells' private view of Wells—a view at once too flattering and libellous. What it shows is the absorp-

tion of the artist in the tin-pot reformer and professional wise man. A descent, indeed! The man impinged upon us and made his first solid success, not as a merchant of banal pedagogics, not as a hawker of sociological liver-pills, but as a master of brilliant and life-like representation, an evoker of unaccustomed but none the less deep-seated emotions, a dramatist of fine imagination and highly resourceful execution. It was the stupendous drama and spectacle of modern life, and not its dubious and unintelligible lessons, that drew him from his test-tubes and guinea-pigs and made an artist of him, and to the business of that artist, once he had served his apprenticeship, he brought a vision so keen, a point of view so fresh and sane, and a talent for exhibition so lively and original that he straightway conquered all of us. Nothing could exceed the sheer radiance of *Tono-Bungay*. It is a work that glows with reality. It projects a whole epoch with unforgettable effect. It is a moving-picture conceived and arranged, not by the usual ex-bartender or chorus man, but by an extremely civilized and sophisticated observer, alert to every detail of the surface and yet acutely aware of the internal play of forces, the essential springs, the larger, deeper lines of it. In brief, it is a work of art of the soundest merit, for it both represents accurately and interprets convincingly, and under everything is a current of feeling that co-ordinates and informs the whole.

But in the success of the book and of the two or three following it there was a temptation, and in the temptation a peril. The audience was there, high in expectation, eagerly demanding more. And in the ego of the man—a true proletarian, and hence born with morals, faiths, certainties, vastly gaseous hopes—there was an urge. That urge, it seems to me, began to torture him when he set about *The Passionate Friends*. In the presence of it, he was dissuaded from the business of an artist—made discontented with the business of an artist. It was not enough to display the life of his time with accuracy and understanding; it was not even enough to criticize it with a penetrating humour and sagacity. From the depths of his being, like some foul miasma, there arose the old, fatuous yearning to change it, to improve it, to set it right where it was wrong, to make it over according to some pattern superior to the one followed by the Lord God Jehovah. With this sinister impulse, as abberant in an artist as a taste for legs in an archbishop, the instinct, that had created *Tono-Bungay*, and *The New Machiavelli* gave battle, and for a while the issue was in doubt. But with *Marriage*, its trend began to be apparent—and before long the evangelist was triumphant, and his bray battered the ear, and in the end there was a quite different Wells before us, and a Wells worth infinitely less than the one driven off. To-day one must put him where he has begun to put himself—not among the literary artists of English, but among the brummagem prophets of England. His old rival was

Arnold Bennett. His new rival is the Fabian Society, or maybe Lord Northcliffe, or the surviving Chesterton, or the later Hilaire Belloc.

The prophesying business is like writing fugues; it is fatal to every one save the man of absolute genius. The lesser fellow—and Wells, for all his cleverness, is surely one of the lesser fellows—is bound to come to grief at it, and one of the first signs of his coming to grief is the drying up of his sense of humour. Compare *The Soul of a Bishop* or *Joan and Peter* to *Ann Veronica* or *The History of Mr. Polly*. One notices instantly the disappearance of the comic spirit, the old searching irony—in brief, of the precise thing that keeps the breath of life in Arnold Bennett. It was in *Boon,* I believe, that this irony showed its last flare. There is a passage in that book which somehow lingers in the memory: a portrait of the United States as it arose in the mind of an Englishman reading the *Nation* of yesteryear: "a vain, garrulous and unprosperous female of uncertain age, and still more uncertain temper, with unfounded pretensions to intellectuality and an idea of refinement of the most negative description . . . the Aunt Errant of Christendom." A capital whimsy—but blooming almost alone. A sense of humour, had it been able to survive the theology, would certainly have saved us from Lady Sunderbund, in *The Soul of a Bishop,* and from Lady Charlotte Sydenham in *Joan and Peter*. But it did not and could not survive. It always withers in the presence of the messianic delusion, like justice and the truth in front of patriotic passion. What takes its place in the oafish, witless buffoonishness of the chautauquas and the floor of Congress—for example, the sort of thing that makes an intolerable bore of *Bealby*.

Nor are Wells' ideas, as he has so laboriously expounded them, worth the sacrifice of his old lively charm. They are, in fact, second-hand, and he often muddles them in the telling. In *First and Last Things* he preaches a flabby Socialism, and then, toward the end, admits frankly that it doesn't work. In *Boon* he erects a whole book upon an eighth-rate platitude, to wit, the platitude that English literature, in these latter times, is platitudinous—a three-cornered banality, indeed, for his own argument is a case in point, and so helps to prove what was already obvious. In *The Research Magnificent* he smouches an idea from Nietzsche, and then mauls it so badly that one begins to wonder whether he is in favour of it or against it. In *The Undying Fire* he first states the obvious, and then flees from it in alarm. In his War books he borrows right and left—from Dr. Wilson, from the British Socialists, from Romain Rolland, even from such profound thinkers as James M. Beck, Lloyd George, and the editor of the New York *Tribune*—and everything that he borrows is flat. In *Joan and Peter* he first argues that England is going to pot because English education is too formal and archaic, and then that Germany is going to pot because German education is too realistic and opportunist. He

seems to respond to all the varying crazes and fallacies of the day; he swallows them without digesting them; he tries to substitute mere timeliness for reflection and feeling. And under all the rumble-bumble of bad ideas is the imbecile assumption of the jitney messiah at all times and everywhere; that human beings may be made over by changing the rules under which they live, that progress is a matter of intent and foresight, that an act of Parliament can cure the blunders and check the practical joking of God.

Such notions are surely no baggage for a serious novelist. A novelist, of course, must have a point of view, but it must be a point of view untroubled by the crazes of the moment, it must regard the internal workings and meanings of existence and not merely its superficial appearances. A novelist must view life from some secure rock, drawing it into a definite perspective, interpreting it upon an ordered plan. Even if he hold (as Conrad does, and Dreiser, and Hardy, and Anatole France) that it is essentially meaningless, he must at least display that meaninglessness with reasonable clarity and consistency. Wells shows no such solid and intelligible attitude. He is too facile, too enthusiastic, too eager to teach to-day what he learnt yesterday. Van Wyck Brooks once tried to reduce the whole body of his doctrine to a succinct statement. The result was a little volume a great deal more plausible than any that Wells himself has ever written—but also one that probably surprised him now and then as he read it. In it all his contradictions were reconciled, all his gaps bridged, all his shifts ameliorated. Brooks did for him, in brief, what William Bayard Hale did for Dr. Wilson in *The New Freedom,* and has lived to regret it, I dare say, or at all events the vain labour of it, in the same manner. . . .

What remains of Wells? There remains a little shelf of very excellent books, beginning with *Tono-Bungay* and ending with *Marriage.* It is a shelf flanked on the one side by a long row of extravagant romances in the manner of Jules Verne, and on the other side by an even longer row of puerile tracts. But let us not underestimate it because it is in such uninviting company. There is on it some of the liveliest, most original, most amusing, and withal most respectable fiction that England has produced in our time. In that fiction there is a sufficient memorial to a man who, between two debauches of claptrap, had his day as an artist.

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ERNEST BOYD

Ernest A. Boyd was born in Dublin in 1887. He came to the United States by way of the British Consular service, and within a very short space of time became an acknowledged leader in New York literary circles. His reputation as a critic is as great in England and on

the Continent as it is in the country of his adoption. Among his works are *Ireland's Literary Renaissance*, *Appreciations and Depreciations*, *The Contemporary Drama of Ireland*, and *Literary Blasphemies*.

The following essay has been taken from *Literary Blasphemies* by permission of Messrs. Harper and Brothers.

EPILOGUE

IN THE distant days when Sir Hall Caine, O.B.E., had not yet fulfilled his destiny, when he was T. Hall Caine, author of a book about Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his master, he collected into a volume all the adverse criticism of Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, and Shelley, which had appeared in the British quarterly reviews during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Since then several collections of this kind have been made, and every student of literature is expected to smile condescendingly when the names of Wilson, Lockhart, Jeffrey, and Gifford are mentioned. These misguided men frankly dissented from what we now regard as the accepted and only possible view of the writers concerned. We intend to be wiser—or more cautions—and our critics will see to it that the first twenty-five years of this century shall yield no such booty as may be found in these compilations, from Mr. Caine's *Cobwebs of Criticism* to Mr. Mordell's *Notorious Literary Attacks*.

Mr. Mordell's recent collection, it so happens, includes nothing later than Henley's review of the official life of Robert Louis Stevenson, which appeared in 1901. Not only has there been a great and obvious change in the manners and method of criticism since the days of the quarterly reviewers, but even Henley's protest against the "R.L.S." legend marks a stage in the evolution of reviewing. The tendency is to risk future ridicule by an excess of amiability and credulity rather than by vigorous and independent expressions of heresy. By a fortunate coincidence, readiness to praise is a critic's surest means of attaining fame. In fact, one might compile a pretty volume under the title, *Notorious Literary Enthusiasms*, and the book would be even more diverting a generation hence than Mr. Mordell's.

If it be not the supreme blasphemy, I should like to say a word in defence of the heretics of criticism. It will be admitted, I think, that the scurrility of the quarterly reviewers and the violence of their attacks on Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, and the rest, were manifestations of political feuds and prejudices rather than positive examples of inability to understand and appreciate, or proofs of critical incompetence. The overstressing of personalities detracted considerably from the value of what Gifford and Lockhart and the others had to say. Because their judgments have, in the main, been reversed for the moment, it is com-

monly assumed that they proved merely their own stupidity. The corollary seems to be that one ought to beware of all such excoriations, lest a like fate befall the critic rash enough to speak his own mind frankly. Lockhart is the author of two classics of English biography, and Wilson and Jeffrey did much more for letters than earn notoriety for themselves by attacking Coleridge and Wordsworth.

From this I conclude that, while they may be charged with prejudice and even bad taste, their records establish their claim to be regarded as competent critics. Their criticism, moreover, is far too intelligent to be set aside as futile, and their errors of judgment should be attributed, not so much to their incapacity as critics as to their readiness, in certain cases, to allow political and other prepossessions to run away with good sense. The defects upon which they insisted were and are real, and it is simply our dread of literary blasphemy which prevents us from admitting in those authors who have become classics the presence of flaws which we should at once denounce in a contemporary writer—that is, if he had not yet achieved the commercial renown and success which, in the eyes of many critics, confer the same immunity from honest scrutiny as the verdict of posterity.

Nothing is more illuminating, in this connexion, than the contrast between attacks coloured by sheer personal prejudice and attacks clearly inspired by the refusal of the critic's intelligence to be hoodwinked by convention or deceived by spurious merit. Swinburne has survived Morley's article on *Poems and Ballads: First Series* as surely as Keats has survived Gifford's attack on *Endymion*. Morley, nevertheless, was absolutely right in his main contentions, and no part of Swinburne has been more readily abandoned by his admirers to-day than that which excited the wrath of his critic in 1866. Allowing for a certain Early Victorian exaggeration in the horrifying insinuations as to the "unspeakable foulness" and the "feverish carnality" of his "libidinous song," Morley's critical instinct was sound when he ridiculed and protested against the wearisome repetitions and affectation of those "quivering flanks," "splendid supple thighs," "hot sweet throats," and "all this stinging and biting, all these 'lithe lascivious regrets,' all this talk of snakes and fire, of blood and wine and brine, of perfumes and poisons and ashes."

On the other hand, Mr. Mordell's volume contains a superb specimen of the kind of criticism which is not merely wrong, but absurd because it was the work of an incompetent. Despite the fashionable habit of extolling Hawthorne, it would be easy to analyse his work, as Mr. Van Wyck Brooks has analysed Mark Twain and Henry James, and show him to have been a truly appalling example of the wreckage strewn in the path of puritanism. That contention would be disputed, but it would lack the peculiar irritation provoked by a criticism of *The Scarlet Letter* which begins: "As yet our literature, however, humble, is undefiled, and as such is just cause for national pride, nor,

much as we long to see it elevated in style, would we thank the Boccaccio who should give it the classic stamp at the expense of its purity." The writer then congratulates America on having no writers "involved in the manufacture of a Brothel Library," and admonishes Hawthorne for making insinuations against the Puritans. "When a degenerate Puritan, whose Socinian conscience is but the skimmed milk of their creamy fanaticism, allows such a conscience to curdle within him, in dyspeptic acidulation, and then belches forth derision at the sour piety of his forefathers—we snuff at him, with an honest scorn."

After this elegant flower of rhetoric, it is reassuring to hear that "we shall entirely mislead our reader if we give him to suppose that *The Scarlet Letter* is coarse in its details, or indecent in its phraseology. This very article of ours is far less suited to ears polite than any page of the romance before us." Yet, "damsels who shrink at the reading of the Decalogue would probably luxuriate in bathing their imagination in the crystal of its delicate sensuality," and "the composition itself would suffice . . . to Ethiopize the snowiest conscience that ever sat like a swan upon that mirror of heaven, a Christian maiden's imagination." Here the writer was not an educated critic, but an obscure contributor to a church paper. The difference between this prurient drivel and the violence of Lockhart is the difference between criticism by critics and criticism by moralizing amateurs.

The spirit which prompts us to treat as blasphemous any unfavourable opinion of the immortal dead is a symptom of a change in our critical attitude which is relatively late in literary history, and which entered its culminating phase with the beginning of the new century. From poll-parroting the pedagogues who have made literature a compulsory luxury of democracy, like the possession of a vote, the plain people have learned to speak respectfully of the literary dead. The next step was inevitable: we extend the same courtesy to the living, provided, of course, they have made good. The isolated individual, with nothing to show but his originality and his independence—and perhaps a lamentable inability to make money—submits to the rigours of disinterested criticism, if he receives any notice at all. But, for the rest, we are assured that it is not the function of criticism to judge, but to convey enthusiasm.

It is constantly said—and with a misleading element of truth—that there are no writers nowadays who starve for want of an opportunity to get a hearing. Editors claim that they are eager for good manuscripts—they doubtless always have been. But if George Gissing were to rewrite *New Grub Street* to meet conditions in America to-day, would the fate of Edwin Reardon be much different? It is as difficult for a writer of his gifts and temperament to maintain his self-respect as ever. In fact, the very facility with which tenth-rate minds achieve everything that success should mean is as disastrous in its effect upon an American Reardon in 1927 as the shabby privations of Grub Street

were in their effect on Gissing's hero. One may surpass Babbitt in mediocrity of ideas, yet pass as his superior by "satirizing" him, just as one may acquire profitable fame by jeering at Main Street or catering to it. The opinion of a circus acrobat or a baseball player can do more for a book than the recommendations of qualified judges. A platitude syndicated a hundredfold commands more respect and remuneration than a thousand original ideas. It takes much less time to explain, for fifty cents a word, why one does or does not believe in twin beds, than to contract a debt with a press-clipping agency because one has insisted on issuing another work of brilliant scholarship. While one is thinking of some sparkling contribution to the debate on Classicism *versus* Romanticism, one's flapper sister has been twice divorced and is famous because of her syndicated dissertations on companionate marriage.

Such, in effect, are the results of democratizing literary education that the merchandising of words is regarded with a seriousness wholly incompatible with the complete and widespread destruction of all literary values. In order to maintain a prestige which they have forfeited, the professional intellectuals have invented the crime of *lèse-littérature,* whereby it becomes an offence to use one's critical faculties in the presence of royalties, particularly if they exceed 10 per cent. At the same time a strenuous effort is made to enforce a system of literary ancestor worship, according to which it is blasphemy to question the divinity of the idols in the temples of letters. The person who genuflects mechanically, or in terror of the pedagogical inquisition, at the name of Milton or Shakespeare, will hardly assert his rights as a free-thinker when confronted by a contemporary reputation.

The academic high priests themselves evade the dilemma by the familiar process of excommunication. Ever ready to discourse about authors safely dead, they avoid pronouncing opinions about the living, save to declare that all criticism of contemporaries is valueless, as if the faculties which presumably enable them to respond to the classics were at the mercy of the calendar and did not function after a certain date. The wisdom of the infallible dogmatist is justified, at least to this extent, that the faithful are not permitted to witness the demoralizing spectacle of schism. The agnostic, however, may contemplate the dreadful consequences of the right of private judgment in the writings of those schismatics who have rashly embraced the heresy of academic modernism. Sectarians and fanatics abound among them, tinged with the evangelical unction of Little Bethel. They are as incapable of reconciling their judgments on current literature with their professions concerning the literature of the past, as they are unaware of the critical incongruity of setting *Main Street* above *Madame Bovary,* or of reciting with like fervour the names of J. M. Barrie and Shakespeare, of *Lorna Doone* and *Tom Jones.*

In short, an attitude of appreciative irreverence toward the estab-

lished reputations in literature is as essential a condition of free criticism as are scepticism and heresy of honest thinking. To adapt a line of Tennyson, which is usually quoted by people who have no intention of believing it, there lives more literary faith in honest critical doubt, believe me, than in half the academic creeds.

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HEYWOOD BROUN

Heywood Campbell Broun was born at Brooklyn, New York, in 1888. He went to Harvard in 1906, and worked for various New York papers after leaving college. He is now contributing editor to *The Nation*. He was war correspondent in France in 1917 and lectured at Columbia University in 1920. He has written *A. E. F.—with General Pershing and the American Forces*, *Seeing Things at Night*, *Pieces of Hate*, *The Boy Grew Older*, *Gandle Follows His Nose*, and *Anthony Comstock*.

The following essay is reprinted from *Pieces of Hate* by permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

LIFE, THE COPY CAT

EVERY evening when dusk comes in the Far West, little groups of men may be observed leaving the various ranch houses and setting out on horseback for the moving-picture shows. They are cowboys and they are intent on seeing Bill Hart in Western stuff. They want to be taken out of the dull and dreary routine of the world in which they live.

But somehow or other the films simply cannot get very far away from life, no matter how hard or how fantastically they try. As we have suggested, the cowboy who struts across the screen has no counterpart in real life, but imitation is sure to bridge the gap. Young men from the cattle country, after much gazing at Hart, will begin to be like him. The styles which the cowboys are to wear next year will be dictated this fall in Hollywood.

It has generally been recognized that life has a trick of taking colour from literature. Once there were no flappers and then F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote *This Side of Paradise* and created them in shoals. Germany had a fearful time after the publication of Goethe's *Werther*, because striplings began to contract the habit of suicide through the influence of the book and went about dying all over the place. And all Scandinavia echoed with slamming doors for years just because Ibsen sent Nora out into the night. In fact the lock on that door has never worked very well since. When *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was

written, things came to such a pass that a bloodhound couldn't see a cake of ice without jumping on it and beginning to bay.

If authors and dramatists can do so much with their limited public, think of the potential power of the maker of films, who has his tens of thousands to every single serf of the writing man. The films can make us a new people and we rather think they are doing it. Fifteen years ago Americans were contemptuous of all Latin races because of their habit of talking with gestures. It was considered the part of patriotic dignity to stand with your hands in your pockets and to leave all expression, if any, to the voice alone.

Watch an excited American to-day and you will find his gestures as sweeping as those of any Frenchman. As soon as he is jarred in the slightest degree out of calm, he immediately begins to follow subconscious promptings and behave like his favourite motion-picture actor. Nor does the resemblance end necessarily with mere externals. Hiram Johnson, the Senator from California, is reported to be the most inveterate movie fan in America, and it is said that he never takes action on a public question without first asking himself, "What would Mary Pickford do under similar circumstances?" In other words, the Senator's position on the proposal to increase the import tax on nitrates may be traced directly to the fact that he spent the previous evening watching *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.

Even the speaking actors, most contemptuous of all motion-picture critics, are slaves of the screen. At an audible drama in a theatre the other day we happened to see a young actor who had once given high promise of achievement in what was then known as the legitimate. Eventually he went into motion pictures, but now he was back for a short engagement. We were shocked to observe that he tried to express every line he uttered with his features and his hands regardless of the fact that he had words to help him. He spoke the lines, but they seemed to him merely incidental. We mean that when his part required him to say, "It is exactly nineteen minutes after two," he tried to do it by gestures and facial expression. This is a difficult feat, particularly as most young players run a little fast or a little slow and are rather in need of regulating. When the young man left the theatre at the close of the performance, we sought him out and reproached him bitterly on the ground of his bad acting.

"Where do you get that stuff?" we asked.

"In the movies," he admitted frankly enough.

There was no dispute concerning facts. We merely could not agree on the question of whether or not it was true that he had become a terrible actor. Life came into the conversation. Something was said by somebody (we can't remember which one of us originated it) about holding the mirror up to nature. The actor maintained that everyday common folk talked and acted exactly like characters in the movies

whenever they were stirred by emotion. We made a bet and it was to be decided by what we observed in an hour's walk. At the south west corner of Thirty-Seventh Street and Third Avenue, we came upon two men in an altercation. One had already laid a menacing hand upon the coat collar of the other. We crowded close. The smaller man tried to shake himself loose from the grip of his adversary. And he said, "Unhand me." He had met the movies and he was theirs.

The discrepancy in size between the two men was so great that my actor friend stepped between them and asked, "What's all this row about?" The big man answered: "He has spoken lightly of a woman's name."

That was enough for us. We paid the bet and went away convinced of the truth of the actor's boast that the movies have already bent life to their will. At first it seemed to us deplorable, but the longer we reflected on the matter the more compensations crept in.

Somehow or other we remembered a tale of Kipling's called *The Finest Story in the World,* which dealt with a narrow-chested English clerk, who, by some freak or other, remembered his past existences. There were times when he could tell with extraordinary vividness his adventures on a Roman galley and later on an expedition of the Norsemen to America. He told all these things to a writer who was going to put them into a book, but before much material had been supplied the clerk fell in love with a girl in a tobacconist's and suddenly forgot all his previous existences. Kipling explained that the lords of life and death simply had to step in and close the doors of the past as soon as the young man fell in love because love-making was once so much more glorious than now that we would all be single if only we remembered.

But love-making is likely to have its renaissance from now on since the movies have come into our lives. Douglas Fairbanks is in a sense the rival of every young man in America. And likewise no young woman can hope to touch the fancy of a male unless she is in some ways more fetching than Mary Pickford. In other words, pace has been provided for lovers. For ten cents we can watch courtship being conducted by experts. The young man who has been to the movies will be unable to avail himself of the traditional ineptitude under such circumstances. Once upon a time the manly thing to do was mumble and make a botch of it. The movies have changed all that. Courtship will come to have a technique. A young man will no more think of trying to propose without knowing how than he would attempt a violin concert without ever having practised. The phantom rivals of the screen will be all about him. He must win to himself something of their fire and gesture. Love-making is not going to be as easy as it once was. Those who have already wed before the competition grew so acute should consider themselves fortunate. Consider for instance

the swain who loves a lady who has been brought up on the picture plays of Bill Hart. That young man who hopes to supplant the shadow idol will have to be able to shoot Indians at all ranges from four hundred yards up, and to ride one hundred thousand miles without once forgetting to keep his face to the camera.

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CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

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ON DOORS

THE opening and closing of doors are the most significant actions of man's life. What a mystery lies in doors!

No man knows what awaits him when he opens a door. Even the most familiar room, where the clock ticks and the hearth glows red at dusk, may harbour surprises. The plumber may actually have called (while you were out) and fixed that leaking faucet. The cook may have had a fit of the vapours and demanded her passports. The wise man opens his front door with humility and a spirit of acceptance.

Which one of us has not sat in some anteroom and watched the inscrutable panels of a door that was full of meaning? Perhaps you were waiting to apply for a job; perhaps you had some "deal" you were ambitious to put over. You watched the confidential stenographer flit in and out, carelessly turning that mystic portal which, to you, revolved on hinges of fate. And then the young woman said, "Mr. Cranberry will see you now." As you grasped the knob the thought flashed, "When I open this door again, what will have happened?"

There are many kinds of doors. Revolving doors for hotels, shops, and public buildings. These are typical of the brisk, bustling ways of modern life. Can you imagine John Milton or William Penn skipping through a revolving door? Then there are the curious little slatted doors that still swing outside denatured bar-rooms and extend only

from shoulder to knee. There are trapdoors, sliding doors, double doors, stage doors, prison doors, glass doors. But the symbol and mystery of a door resides in its quality of concealment. A glass door is not a door at all, but a window. The meaning of a door is to hide what lies inside; to keep the heart in suspense.

Also, there are many ways of opening doors. There is the cheery push of elbow with which the waiter shoves open the kitchen door when he bears in your tray of supper. There is the suspicious and tentative withdrawal of a door before the unhappy book agent or peddler. There is the genteel and carefully modulated recession with which footmen swing wide the oaken barriers of the great. There is the sympathetic and awful silence of the dentist's maid who opens the door into the operating room, and, without speaking, implies that the doctor is ready for you. There is the brisk cataclysmic opening of a door when the nurse comes in, very early in the morning—"It's a boy!"

Doors are the symbol of privacy, of retreat, of the mind's escape into blissful quietude or sad secret struggle. A room without doors is not a room, but a hallway. No matter where he is, a man can make himself at home behind a closed door. The mind works best behind closed doors. Men are not horses to be herded together. Dogs know the meaning and anguish of doors. Have you ever noticed a puppy yearning at a shut portal? It is a symbol of human life.

The opening of doors is a mystic act: it has in it some flavour of the unknown, some sense of moving into a new moment, a new pattern of the human rigmarole. It includes the highest glimpses of mortal gladness: reunions, reconciliations, the bliss of lovers long parted. Even in sadness, the opening of a door may bring relief: it changes and redistributes human forces. But the closing of doors is far more terrible. It is a confession of finality. Every door closed brings something to an end. And there are degrees of sadness in the closing of doors. A door slammed is a confession of weakness. A door gently shut is often the most tragic gesture in life. Every one knows the seizure of anguish that comes just after the closing of a door, when the loved one is still near, within sound of voice, and yet already far away.

The opening and closing of doors is a part of the stern fluency of life. Life will not stay still and let us alone. We are continually opening doors with hope, closing them with despair. Life lasts not much longer than a pipe of tobacco, and destiny knocks us out like the ashes.

The closing of a door is irrevocable. It snaps the pack-thread of the heart. It is no avail to reopen, to go back. Pinero spoke nonsense when he made Paula Tanqueray say, "The future is only the past entered through another gate." Alas, there is no other gate. When the door is shut, it is shut forever. There is no other entrance to that vanished pulse of time. "The moving finger writes, and having writ" ——

There is a certain kind of door-shutting that will come to us all. The kind of door-shutting that is done very quietly, with the sharp click of the latch to break the stillness. They will think then, one hopes, of our unfulfilled decencies rather than of our pluperfected misdemeanours. Then they will go out and close the door.